THE COMMONWEAL

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WOMEN AND POVERTY

THE "subsistence line" is an appalling phrase. It stands for something that cuts across society like a deep lesion through a living organism. Once this is reached the struggle by which man is doomed to earn his bread assumes a catastrophic quality, becomes a panic-stricken fight in which most of the impulses that make for human betterment disappear. After this is passed in a descent, all that progress has achieved in centuries of painful effort suddenly loses its significance. Social workers and thinkers in the past have regarded it with a kind of despair. Charles Péguy, the great regenerate philosopher who laid down his life for France in the early days of the war, could think of nothing terrible enough with which to compare it save the division of souls by the Church into saved and damned.

It will be recalled that Victor Hugo declared that the destitute man "lives on a planet much further from the sun than ours." Father William J. Kerby, of the Catholic University of Washington, sees in poverty when it is extreme, an indictment of society. "The poor," he asserts in his remarkable book, The Social Mission of Charity,* "are subject to conditions of negative and positive kinds which defeat the ends of justice in so many ways and in so many lives that poverty becomes an indictment of the intelligence, good will, and power of political sovereignty itself."

The urgency of the problem, it is quite evident, imposes its own conditions upon the manner in which it has to be met. The processes of legislation are too slow, and given the complexities and chaos of which poverty is a manifestation, none too sure. A class of thinkers, it is true, exists, quite pitiful in their hearts concerning the sorrows of the poor, whose intellect resents the palliatives that charity administers, and who would almost rather let the problem work itself out to the impasse which they see as a necessary prelude to the reënthronement of social justice. And there are others into whose soul the iron has sunk too deep for even this perverted form of idealism. They smile at the illusion that right will ever triumph. They bid men at large recognize the fact that ethics no longer enter into the struggle for existence and erect the precept to make money, by fair means, if possible, but to make it somehow, into an economic duty. Much, they hint, will be forgiven the man who has relieved the state, once for all, of any responsibility to support him or his.

The retort does not depend upon the possession of

**The Social Mission of Charity: A Study of Points of View in Catholic Charities, by William J. Kerby. New York: The Macmillan Company.*

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an exclusively Christian point of view. It is simply this—that the situation of extreme poverty is one that cannot wait, and that in social, as in medical science, there is such a thing as first-aid. But the Christian man or woman can reënforce his answer by precepts that come to him from the very mouth of the Divine Founder and of those who first preached His word. Against the distant vision of eventual social justice all round, to be won at the expense of present suffering, they can recall the promise that the poor will always be with us. To the perverted ethics of the second school, they can, because they must, reply that the first duty of the Christian, when besieged by the world's counsels of expediency, is to keep him or herself unspotted by them, and that the most effective of all ways, suggested by a conjuncture in the text that is no mere matter of chance, is to visit "the widow and the fatherless in their affliction."

That women are called upon to take a very active part in this work of social amelioration is something in the very order of nature. The splendid demonstration at Washington this month, on the occasion of the fifth annual convention of the National Council of Catholic Women, which over two hundred delegates from all over the union attended upon its opening day, and last week's convention in New York, are fresh proof of how deeply this question of social salvage has come home to the hearts and conscience of Christian and Catholic womanhood. There are many reasons why women enter the fight with the zest and enthusiasm which mark the crusader from the humdrum soldier; but it may be in order, in the limits imposed by a short editorial, to suggest two or three.

One is a clear conscience. The waste and muddle of the industrial era to which so many of our discontents are to be traced cannot be laid at woman's door since her political enfranchisement only dates from yesterday. None were sufferers by the social upheaval to the same extent as women, and none grappled more silently or more bravely with the intolerable burden it added to woman's lot of being bread-winner and home-maker at the same time. Women approach the question of social security with a very special and bitter knowledge of what follows its denial or loss. Even when this knowledge does not come from personal experience, it is intimately bound up with functional and temperamental knowledge that women share between them. It is a commonplace that women feel for women far more keenly than men for men.

The second reason is that the one cell of sane and healthy growth in every community is the home, and that the most damning indictment that can be brought against industrialism is that the home has not been spared. "I doubt [it is that well-known militant, Ida M. Tarbell, speaking in her study, The Business of Being a Woman] if there is today a more disintegrating influence at work—one more fatal to sound social development—than that which belittles the home and the position of the woman in it." The inroad which the wholesale employment of women, generally in ill-paid and "blind-alley" occupations, has made upon the old-time conception of woman's sphere, has been gradual. It has been confused by a variety of special conditions and circumstances which make it difficult to draw a clear-cut moral. Nevertheless, in the figures quoted soberly at Washington by Miss Mary T. Waggaman, of the editorial department of the Bureau of Labor Statistics, it is impossible not to see an implied menace, and a very urgent one, to the well-being of the republic. "The number of women now gainfully employed is 2,000,000," Miss Waggaman told the council, "almost half of whom are in the manufacturing and mechanical industries. The increase in late years has been very rapid. One of the harmful results thus far noticed is a startling increase in infant mortality in cases where women work."

Imagination will quite easily add other dangers which escape statistics—the absence of parental control at its most necessary period, which supplied a text for such papers as The Child and the State, The Child in the Streets, and even The Pagan Child; the gradual breakdown in the very conception of domesticity which must ensue when successive generations are brought up in a home where its evidences are haphazard and where, through very pressure of time and poverty, only its harsher side is presented.

In another section of this issue of The Commonweal, more detailed notice is taken of the various Catholic women's activities which have been in recent evidence in Washington, Rome, and New York, and of the surprising extension they have assumed in the past few years. It is evident, if only from the attention paid the problems of childhood, early education, and immigration that women realize the true points at which the question of poverty can be most hopefully assailed. One of the impressions which visitors from Europe carry back to their hard-pressed continent is the atmosphere of hope that alleviates the lot of even the very poor in this country. Poverty has not yet, or only in very benighted and restricted sections, become an hereditary scourge in America—an evil tradition handed down from generation to generation until it has attained, in the words of Mr. C. F. Masterman, the properties of an evil and unnatural growth. It is heartening to note that nearly all the papers read and discussed by women workers in Washington and in New York, while upon a variety of subjects, have a direct bearing upon the economic problem and the most effective way to reduce its pressure on the generation that is struggling upward to light and air. For it is precisely what Father Kerby, in his monograph, terms the "encyclopedic" character of poverty when "it tends to become not merely economic weakness, but all forms of weakness—in health, in education, in physical safety, in culture, taste, outlook, association," gives it its terrifying character and possibilities.

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THE COMMONWEAL

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WEEK BY WEEK

ANYONE who wishes to grasp the importance of organized feminine action in our world and time need merely observe three events which were almost simultaneous: the fifth annual convention of the National Council of Catholic Women, held in Washington; the meeting of the New York Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women; and the International Congress of Catholic Women's Societies, convened in Rome. We know that public gatherings are in themselves of no major importance; but when they testify to a solidly organized program of action, sponsored by devoted thousands having common interests and serving common ideals, they are manifestations of spiritual power that cannot go unnoticed by the world. Scarcely more than a quarter-century has passed since the modern mind, crying on the one hand for feministic independence and recognizing on the other hand the need for bringing to bear upon contemporary problems the energy that had once been incorporated, superbly, in Queen Isabella and Saint Catherine, urged "the angel of the house" to enter the civic arena. But though the time has been short, it seems in retrospect a veritable spring-time.

THE words which Cardinal Merry del Val addressed to the Roman congress are at once a résumé and a resolution—"In a very especial way, women have the lofty mission to guard the integrity of the family, with the condition of which the fate of society is inextricably linked. Whosoever attacks the unity and indissolubility of the domestic kingdom, and seeks to destroy the moral rule and authority enshrined there, delivers also a fatal blow to the welfare of the general human commonwealth, which depends upon the family as upon a life-giving source. Your task is therefore a broad and far-reaching one. You must not look too confidently for immediate results, knowing as you do that while destruction is easy, the work of rebuilding is arduous and tiresome." And what could be more hopeful for the manifold duties of reconstruction than that women, pooling their interest and fortitude, should prepare bravely for a better tomorrow? We here offer no apology for leaving aside many other social and economic events of the hour, in order to review in some detail what the Catholic women's movement has meant, and to take our share in the general act of thanksgiving.

ELSEWHERE we print several special articles dealing with important aspects of the organized work of the Catholic laywomen at home and abroad. In this place we desire to call particular attention to the effort launched by the National Council of Catholic Women to raise an adequate endowment fund for the School of Social Service at Washington. When this institution was founded during the enthusiasm which followed the war, its future was contingent upon a line of policy that seemed firm but was really only too insubstantial. Was the school to remain small and ill-equipped therefore? Were its doors to be closed? The answer to these questions involved the honor of the Catholic body—the everlasting pledge of charity towards the wayward, the unfortunate, which cannot ever be forgotten while the sense of duty survives. There are, of course, many ways of showing kindness towards the poor; but there is none to compare with the systematic labor of those who minister with a full knowledge of what they are attempting. The labyrinth of failure and mistake which lies just on the outskirts of industrial life is no place for an amateur to try his skill in following a compass. Was it then, to be neglected?

ONE cannot help agreeing with Dr. Kerby's plea for the service school—"If this school is not developed, Catholic social workers will be compelled to submit to one of three things: obtain only an incomplete training for their work; attend other schools without the Catholic outlook and philosophy; or stand aside regretting their inability to take any proper part in social work at all." Of course he justified these statements by showing clearly what the school has accomplished up to date. We feel sure that the resolution adopted will not fall to the ground. But there are many people who, because they live far from the turmoil of industrial life and never see "how the other half lives," may dismiss the idea as only just another worthy cause. If they understood actual conditions, they would leap to their feet and give. One recalls the fact that when Cardinal Lavigerie, the bronzed

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and masculine apostle of the desert, came back to France with the certain knowledge that slave-trading was still devastating Africa and with the resolve to blot it out, he ascended a fashionable pulpit and addressed fiery words to those assembled without moving them very sensibly. But when he drew up from beneath the pulpit frame-work the mangled body of a martyred child, men and women rose from their seats, stunned and horrified, casting whatever of money or jewels they had about them at the feet of the prelate. It might be helpful if those who have battled with the terror and desolation of the streets could lift before us the wounded souls of some who have failed in the bitter industrial struggle—the souls of girls who have never in their lives touched the fringes of the mercy of Christ; the souls of others who have despaired in their poverty and defenselessness, mothering babes whom some stern judge may sometime sentence to the gallows for other crimes than those which now so harrow the comfortable. One would like to see the service school endowment made a Christmas gift to the American poor. Those who graduate from it and undertake the heavy labor in the name of that communion of the elect for which even the most wasted of human lives has been destined, will never profit greatly in an earthly sense. But theirs will be the high romance of the service all of us yearn to do, when we reflect upon the merciless victimizing of those whom Christ might have gathered into His arms, with the infinitude of Divine benediction, because He saw in them the innocent image of His Father.

IT is difficult to see precisely what are now the stakes in the long-drawn battle for coal supremacy. Mr. Lewis's letter to the President calls attention to a fact which is obvious and pertinent—the Jacksonville Agreement, arrived at in 1924 by representatives of the United Mine Workers and of the bituminous operators, has not been faithfully carried into effect. It then proceeds to the discussion of a matter of principle: whether or not the federal government is interested in trying to enforce a settlement in the making of which its Departments of Commerce and Labor had a share. If official observers admitted, a year ago, that "no better example of coöperation to secure the elimination of national waste can be presented," most of us will experience some difficulty in deciding why the public and its government should not be eager to see that "coöperation" continued now. According to all appearances, however, the President is not pleased with the tone of Mr. Lewis's statement and its insinuation.

WE have no way of telling what the attitude of the administration will finally be, excepting that it promises to uphold the theory that federal intervention, even in the interests of a contract arrived at through collective bargaining and designed to aid the general welfare, is not provided for by law. But whatever may be the causal connection between the anthracite strike and the threatened clash of interests in the bituminous fields, there seems no reason to doubt that Mr. Lewis is anxious to use the force of his entire organization to prevent the operation of soft-coal mines on a non-union basis, and to make the Jacksonville Agreement really binding. A heavy fight is pending; and the public, placed at the mercy of the wrangling protagonists, discovers once again that industrial lawlessness is an expensive and harrowing neighbor. Surely the time has come to look for a way out, not in drastic legal expedients, but in some safe general policy which will guarantee the progress of coöperation, either through collective bargaining or through some other means.

THE editorial comment that is appearing anent the Methodist Board of Temperance's anti-Smith manifesto must be making the leaders of the Methodist connection, sold to prohibition as its leading tenet, rather doubt the wisdom of their headlong course. The letters, in particular, coming as they do from many minds in many communions, are instructive. One published by the New York World from "a life-long member of a Protestant church" lets considerable light in upon the whole movement. "Crying aloud for separation of state and church," declares the writer, "these men themselves are laying the foundations for an ecclesiastical government of this country and the standardization or religion." And the correspondent further sees "the intemperate attack upon Governor Smith and the bare-faced misrepresentation of his standing as an American executive" recoiling "like a boomerang . . . discrediting the Methodist Church and humiliating every one of its members who believes in Christian tolerance in religion and fair play in politics." Other letters are of the same tenor.

IT is we believe, an established physiological fact that a growth within a body can assume such proportions, become so invested with its arteries, veins, nerve-cells and general vital processes that extirpation is difficult without risking the death of the whole organism. The proportions which the doctrine of prohibition has assumed within the Methodist-Baptist bloc has by now something of this unpleasantly vital character. It has come to be not only the outstanding plank of Methodism, but the one test which Methodism employs when examining the fitness of any candidate for public office. Officially this board of many functions now decrees the unfitness of one man because he is not in accord with the tenets of the church of Charles Wesley. It declares that despite his record and the general esteem of his fellow-citizens, he may not be chosen as President because of his attitude towards the one thing they have chosen to erect into a touchstone of morality and political good faith.

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IN a message to the state of Washington just issued by Governor Hartley, many of the arguments advanced in the recent Commonweal series of articles on State Universities are reiterated. The Governor is at one with them in decrying the competitive spirit among state institutions. He recognizes the failure of the present system of incompetent regents and money-begging presidents. The remedy which he advocates is, however, worse than the disease. He would abolish the present boards of regents, along with the state superintendent of education, and substitute a single board, appointed by the governor, which would have control of all public educational institutions in the state. Such centralization of power would render it easier than ever for politicians to make a shuttlecock of education. Let a Ku Klux governor appoint a Ku Klux board—we know what would happen. Furthermore, the change would not accomplish its alleged purpose of diminishing existing rivalries among institutions; on the contrary it would tend to intensify them. One can easily imagine the frantic effort of every institution to secure dominant representation on the single board upon whose favor and tolerance its very life would depend.

HARDLY more acceptable are the Governor's recommendations with regard to the secondary schools. He denounces the "extravagant and over-elaborate instruction" now given, and particularly the emphasis upon "frills." The latter term, in the language of state educators usually refers to music and drawing, subjects which are almost always the first to be attacked in every movement for economy. The false and pernicious notion that art is a mere luxury, pertaining to the rich, instead of a veritable necessity of life, constantly recurs. A total ignorance of what art meant to the common man in the middle-ages and the renaissance is partially responsible for this delusion. It is the common man, above all, who has been deprived of his heritage of beauty. Now when the secondary schools are beginning to try to restore it to him, it is sad that his very friends are so often the ones who intervene to stop the art of tardy justice.

THE blessings of a reputation are numerous. A correspondent reports that the ex-Kaiser has once again been called upon to settle a controversy in art-appreciation; and he adds that Doorn expects its imperial guest to bring it fame as great as that of Weimar or Nuremberg. Perhaps he will. The little city of New York is on the verge of an era of creative splendor, now that its retiring police commissioner, Mr. Richard Enright, will undertake to raise the level of American fiction; but fiction in the modern sense—as the vestibule to drama and scenarios, which are better calculated to halt the crime wave right where it begins. The commissioner will have two novels tucked into their covers before it becomes necessary to think of that baffling problem, Johnnie's literary advice to Santa Claus. The Borrowed Shield, and The Grogan Girl, are juicy slices of life cut from the joint where life is tenderest and most nutritious. They are, to use a modest phrase, red-hot crook stuff. They palpitate with the emotions of an officer whose duties have taught him how valuable a deterrent from crime may be found in lurid pictures of criminal life. It is likely, of course, that these stories can be really effective only when they are seen on the stage; and that this is why Mr. Enright, with the true modesty of an honored servant, has agreed to bothering himself with footlights— provided the reward of merit be not unworthy. No literary man was ever more diligent; and the mayor who retires in the commissioner's company must suffer not a few qualms at the thought of how stray moments of leisure from the burdensome cares of office might have been put to use artistically on books with such possible titles as The Man with a Hundred Nickels, or Boodle, the Traction Terror.

CATHOLIC WOMEN AT WORK

ONLY very recently the press of France reported a splendid feminine achievement in the interests of economic peace. A strike in the Paris garment trades had led the Christian syndicates of workers to arrive at a form of collective bargaining with their employers which virtually brought the trouble to a close. But as the cost of living advanced, it became apparent that the stipulations in the contract were no longer satisfactory; and acting on the same principle of coöperation, workers' representatives once more entered into relations with the employers' agents. The matter at issue was successfully arbitrated and industrial peace was not disturbed. We must see in this good work, however, only one success gained by the Catholic plan for organizing female workers which has been developing slowly and steadily during more than forty years. The story of how the various original groups came into being, organized as they were by heroic women who recognized the needs of the hour much better than many influential men, is too long to be told here. But we may note that when they joined hands with their male co-workers, in the Confédération Française des Travailleurs Chrétiens which was established in 1920, they brought not only their numbers but also their experience and valor to aid in a gigantic redemptive enterprise "No matter what religious or philosophic opinions one may profess," writes M. Henri Joly, "it must be a source of gratification to know that the work of women has been lifted from a brutish level, and that it has sought of its own accord to raise professional standards and to carry on constantly more valuable relief work. It is necessary that woman should remain woman, even while not neglecting to defend herself. The work of the feminine unions has been a demonstration."

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Though the task has never been easy and may well have appeared hopeless at times, great leaders have never been wanting. Their story is truly heroic; and as we read the accounts of those encouraging assemblages in the interest of Catholic social principle which France calls the "semaines sociales," we come upon their names as the traveler passes great ships bringing priceless cargoes. And of course there are ramifications: the work of inducing women to live upon farms in the country, as undertaken by such brilliant speakers and writers as Mlle. Léontine Zanta; and the task of preparing the Catholic mothers for civic duties, to the accomplishment of which even such busy men as the Duc de Broglie have thought it well worth the while to give their attention.

FRENCH LITERARY ACTIVITIES

But economics is not the only social terrain of importance. Civilization is dependent upon the motives which people preface to their actions—the visions, or dreams, of what they desire that life should be; and so we may, perhaps, call literature the economics of dreaming. Catholic France has realized how necessary it is to introduce the spirit of Christian faith into the work of letters, thereby counteracting the subtle poisons which have so long corroded and corrupted it. In very many ways women of talent have lent almost invaluable aid. It is a publisher faithful to the Church who has established the Cahiers Feminins for books by women and for women, and his list is already brilliant. The prestige of French feminine literary activity is not, however, limited to a single throne. We may note, by way of example, the spirited journalistic endeavor of Henriette Charasson, whose analysis of Porto-Riche was a gallant task somebody had to carry through for the profit and solace of us all, and whose stirring poetic sequence dealing with the privileges of motherhood is both a literary event and a challenge; the novels of Colette Yver and her sisters of a slightly younger generation; and the work of creating a worthy religious literature, at the head of which is inscribed the benignant name of the Little Flower. Nor have any of the arts which fringe upon literature been neglected. Gifted and loyal women are the very backbone of that organization for the renaissance of a spiritual theatre which Henri Gheon, its founder, has called Les Compagnons de Notre Dame. And, of course, it is a pleasure for Americans to know that in the midst of the many women associated with the movement to vitalize the relations between religion and the fine arts, is our own delicate and masterly painter of domesticities and heroisms, Miss Elizabeth Nourse. This suggests the truth that the activity of women knows no national or social boundary. What we have said here of France might well lead to some passing homage for the excellent artistic achievement of Catholic women elsewhere. While demonstrating always their entire fidelity to the great tradition of western civilization, they have proved themselves masters of their time and interpreters of the contemporary mood.

THE WOMEN OF ENGLAND

England's Catholic Women's League is characterized by that intrepidity and sense of practical values which seem to have been bred in the British bone. Its official publications are wholly without that melody of self-congratulation which so often sings organizations into a sound and inactive slumber; its program gives as much attention to vigilantly supervised branch work as to more pretentious national projects; and it safeguards the unworldliness of its motives by making room for annual retreats so arranged as to make it possible for all members to attend without great inconvenience. The social welfare work of the league is now entrusted, for the most part, to paid workers; and one of the great objectives for the future is to escape the necessity for leaving the duties of girl guidance wholly in the hands of charitable volunteers. Nowhere are the moral problems engendered by industrial living so acute and formidable as in England, where the "catalogue of artificial stimuli to instinct," as someone has called the vast commercialized system for arousing the passions, is constantly turned, leaf by leaf, before throngs of young people hungry for respite from the gruelling life of factory towns. Therefore the league is busy in a thousand ways: in founding scholarships at the Catholic Workers' College, Oxford; in answering the call of the clergy for aid in rescue work; in battling with the advocates of birth control; and in suggesting a more rigid supervision of entertainment which, like the movies, tends to become socially dangerous. Perhaps there used to be such a thing as "Victorianism" in England, but these Catholic women of the twentieth century know where they are living and what must be done about it quite as well as the most emancipated "up-to-dater." And of course they are not neglecting the fortress of home. When some day we in America come to summarize what has been said and done about the education of children by English women, we shall learn to recognize that it is quite as valuable and noble as the work done elsewhere by such leaders as Montessori.

GERMANY WELL ORGANIZED

Germany has what is, perhaps, the most efficiently organized body of Catholic women in the world. Nor would it be proper to suppose that the efficiency is the result of a strain in the national character: hard work was needed to separate the good housekeeper of the Rhineland from her domestic duties, but when she realized the obligation imposed by changing political institutions and social habits, she rose to the occasion with a remarkable good will. The Katholische Frauenbund has enrolled more than 300,000 members, distributed in many hundreds of local groups and de-

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voted to enterprise of varied character. Its annual congresses are models of their kind, and have led to a much deeper understanding of common problems and purposes. Germany is fortunate in having a number of women distinguished for achievement in public life, academic research, and literature. The influence of these upon their sisters, particularly in Catholic circles, has been far-reaching. It has helped to show women that they can combine fidelity to domestic affairs with courageous effort to do their share for the national well-being. And yet there is a happy tendency not to waste time and energy serving the mirage of "ideals," but rather a firm determination to do some little things as well and patiently as possible. We cannot avoid calling attention to a passage which seems basic in an address by Frau Helene Weber—"I am not merely I. I am part and parcel of a great communion of souls. We are all one—one mighty thought and one goal, one body and one spirit, one future and one pathway—in one God and one firm faith." And it would be a pleasure to introduce, if there were time, at least the names of some of the valiant women who have done excellent work on behalf of the principles sponsored by German Catholic womanhood. We shall mention only one—Frau Agnes Neuhaus, founder of the great Fürsorgeverein for girls, women and children. Aroused by personal contact with misfortune while she was holding public office, this remarkable woman has built up an organization which is active in all Germany and has done incalculable good. If there were a Catholic Nobel Prize for charitable achievement, it might well acquire lustre from being awarded to her.

AUSTRIA'S STRUGGLE

Catholic feminine activity in Austria has come to figure very prominently in the contemporary endeavor to weld the non-Socialistic population of the country into a solid and influential group. This was made necessary by the development of a severe struggle for the control of educational principles, the issue being religious instruction. Cardinal Piffl, of Vienna, summoned the women's groups to join with men in a common Volksbund, to stand for a certain definite program and to take its cue from a journal especially created for the purpose. The wisdom and effectiveness of this step have already been proved, just as the loyalty and resourcefulness of Austrian women has once more been enthusiastically praised by the leaders in the fight. These women take a large share in many prominent movements, notably the affiliation of Austrian Catholic literary workers, for mutual aid and improvement. The results of this coöperation have been most promising in a time of general depression and doubt. Through all these years of hardship, Austria has been confronted and encouraged in a very especial way by excellent Catholic women of noble birth, several of whom are internationally famous as authors or artists. The neighboring Slovak nations also have their energetic leagues of Catholic women. In a very particular way these have for their goal the reunion of the orthodox Eastern churches with Rome. They coöperate with feminine societies in these churches, and attempt to destroy barriers and prejudices that prevent concord. "The road towards Eastern reunion," Miss Christitch has recently reminded us, "is long and painful. But each little prejudice removed, each token of charity or esteem between Catholic and Orthodox, must be counted a gain in the great cause. It is part of the daily liturgy of the Orthodox Church to pray that all may be one; and united with their Catholic sisters in this great thought, the Orthodox sisters are unwittingly but steadfastly carrying out the wishes of the Holy Father expressed in that far-reaching encyclical, Ecclesiam Dei."

THE SPIRITUAL IDEAL

There is a great deal more that might well be included in this rapid sketch of the ways in which Catholic womanhood has realized the old meaning of "orbis terrarum." But enough has been said to indicate how universal is the acceptance by women of the beautiful ideal of a communion that transcends earth, by the light of which those who are militant for the sake of final peace and the legacy of good to our children, go on hopefully with the daily task of clearing up the world's muddles and mistakes. After all, it is not strange that those from whose bosoms the race gathers life and strength should possess a special and marvelous residue of fortitude for the achievement of beneficence. The vision of motherhood is seen not only under the Bethlehem stars or within the gloom of Calvary. During 2,000 years our fathers took the miracle of charity from Mary's fingers as naturally as they accepted food from an earthly housewife. And today the work of rescuing girls, of relieving the poor mother, of safeguarding the conditions and awards of feminine labor, and of welcoming the stranger within our gates, is done best under her auspices and in memory of her consecrated life. Nor is it wonderful that so many of the saints raised to the altars of the Church should have been women of whose sanctity a pity for the haplessness of the life they saw around them was an abiding characteristic. Lourdes, Orléans, Lisieux, are three bright satellite stars in a world which sorely needs stars as its guide to the haven of the City which, however shadowily, may be built on earth. There is more than sentimental significance in the fact that the spiritual "patroness" of the United States of America is Mary Immaculate. The Catholics of the nation know that their practical labors in the cause of social reform do not lose, but gain immeasurably in force and cogency through having and owning as their ideal her who, in Wordsworth's inspired phrase, is "our human nature's solitary boast."

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CATHOLIC WOMEN UNITE

By ELISABETH RANDOLPH SHIRLEY

FROM November 15 to 18, the fifth annual convention of the National Council of Catholic Women was held in Washington, D. C. It was an event which marked the fifth milestone in the progress of a movement launched in the United States five years ago by the hierarchy, and forming part of a greater movement which has been going on for the same period of time and which is generally referred to as the Catholic lay movement.

The years between 1918 and 1925—that is to say, the years following the end of the world war—have witnessed an unprecedented activity in the field of women's work. The granting of suffrage and the increase in the occupational opportunities open to women have caused nothing short of a revolution in the social and economic life of many nations. Woman's voice is heard with insistence in the legislative halls; it reaches beyond the boundaries of nations to express the opinions and claims of the women of the world on questions of international concern. So forceful has it become, in fact, that there are those who call our age the "age of feminism" and who complain that we are living in a "woman's world."

It is but natural that women should have sought to secure the strength that lies in union by banding themselves together in organizations through which their work could be made more effective and gain greater recognition. Since the end of the world war, women's organizations, national and international, representing every shade of opinion, from radical communism to utopian idealism, have increased and multiplied almost by magic in every country on the face of the globe.

That the modern world has much work for women to do is an undisputed fact. That the value of the contribution which woman, by her very nature, is best fitted to make to society has not in the past been fully recognized, is, of course, true. But that the "woman movement," as such, has proved an unmixed blessing, or that it has raised the standards of the world is, in many ways, open to question. The so-called emancipation of women has been held responsible for a large share in the changed morality of the present day; and it cannot be denied that women are among the most active agents and exponents of the materialistic philosophy which is undermining the most sacred of our social institutions.

But where women have torn down it is for women to build again; and the Church, with her characteristic wisdom, has called upon women to do their share in the great work of social reconstruction. Still holding fast to the age-old principles of justice and morality which were taught by Christ from the hills and lakes of Judea, the Church has called into being in the United States, and in many of the leading countries of Europe and South America, strong national associations of Catholic women whose mission is to stem the rising tide of paganism and preserve the Christian ideals which form the safeguards of society. Such an organization is the National Council of Catholic Women, founded five years ago as a department of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, and defined, despite its youth, as "the greatest organization of Catholic women in the United States today."

In order fully to understand its nature and its work, the National Council of Catholic Women must be considered from three different points of view: as a federation of existing organizations, from the smallest sewing circle to the largest club or league, for which it serves as a clearing house and an information centre; as a national organization of Catholic women, the medium through which the Catholic women of America may speak and act as a unit on all matters of public interest and assist in meeting problems of a national scope; as an integral part of the National Catholic Welfare Conference and one of the channels through which the work of this body is made known to the Catholic laity of the country, and through which the laity is enabled to participate in this work to the end that the Church may give to this nation all that is highest and holiest and best, that this great experiment in democracy may live and prosper.

This three-fold function places the council in a unique position among women's organizations, Catholic or secular, and makes it impossible for it to interfere with the activity or the autonomy of any affiliated group, since to do so were to weaken the very elements which give it being and make it truly a national organization, and to deprive it of an outlet for the Catholic ideals which flow through it from the National Catholic Welfare Conference to the laity of the nation.

The need for a strong national organization of Catholic women is obvious. National organizations of women are actively shaping public policy in state and nation. The American people today are beginning to realize that it is possible to sow the seeds of destruction within a nation that is practically invulnerable from without. The process known today by the term "boring from within" is in evidence in many of the fundamental institutions upon which the welfare of the nation depends, but nowhere more alarmingly than in one of the most vital and sacred of them all—the home. To lead the world in the number of divorces is today the distinction of the United States. What is to become of the home if divorce continues at the present rate? And if to the divorce evil there is added birth-control propaganda, what is left that is sacred

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in the relationship upon which the home itself rests, and what foundation is there for the assumption that the nation itself can survive the dissolution of the units which give it life? The general and growing disregard for religion and religious observance is paralleled by a growing disregard for authority both in the home and in the nation, and an increase in crime that is the more appalling because of the youth of many of the criminals. So completely has the world become dominated by materialistic philosophies that there are those who maintain that stability can be restored by legislation alone. Many of the welfare measures introduced in recent years have been sponsored and are supported by women's organizations. Women likewise have given their support to laws which, in the opinion of thinking persons, would intensify rather than restrain some of the destructive influences at work in the world today. Catholic women, believing firmly that present evils are due solely to the rejection of the Christian principles of morality and justice taught by the Church throughout the centuries, cannot remain aloof when the opportunity is offered them to coöperate in the movement to gain recognition for the divine teachings which safeguard civilization. This is the responsibility confronting the National Council of Catholic Women.

At the fifth annual convention of this organization which has just come to a close in Washington, the attendance of women from virtually every state and the majority of the dioceses of the country was proof that the council has succeeded in one of its principal missions—the organizing and uniting of Catholic womanhood. The character and ability of the delegates, the intelligence with which they discussed the various problems laid before them were evidence that the work of information, the dissemination of ideas and ideals undertaken by the council in its capacity as a distributing agency for the other departments of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, has met with a gratifying response.

Two things stood out prominently in the reports presented at the convention. One was the stimulus which small, local groups of Catholic women all over the country have received through their affiliation with the national body; and the other was the recognition which the National Council of Catholic Women has received from Catholic and non-Catholic agencies both at home and abroad.

While the growth of the council is not, of course, commensurate with the need, it has, nevertheless, been characterized as phenomenal. When it is considered that in five years it has affiliated thousands of organizations and individual women, and that it has organized diocesan and archdiocesan councils in thirty-three dioceses and archdioceses—an average of nearly seven a year—this term would seem to be justified. During the past year diocesan meetings ranging from a general inspirational meeting to a four-day convention were held in seven archdioceses and sixteen dioceses, not including local meetings for the presentation of the council's program in numerous cities and towns. It is obvious now that the lay movement is not a dream but a reality, and that Catholic thought and Catholic action have been wonderfully stimulated.

The council is organized in the dioceses only upon the invitation of the Ordinary, who assigns to the diocesan council the particular piece of local work which it is to undertake. The support and encouragement of the hierarchy and clergy have been one of the great factors in the success of the extension of the movement throughout the country. The diocesan activities may include such varying programs as girls' welfare work, the care of newly arrived immigrants, coöperation with the parish schools, health and recreation programs, the religious instruction of children in rural communities and many others. But there is one which is common to them all. This is the establishment of study clubs—a movement which has everywhere met with enthusiastic interest and support on the part of clergy and laity alike. The study club outlines, prepared by the study club committee of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, have been greatly in demand. The National Council of Catholic Women has coöperated in making outlines on "the Christian family" and "girls' welfare," and is now at work on a series of outlines covering the history of the Church in the several states. The value of the study club movement is shown by the following statement taken from the report delivered by the executive secretary of the council before the convention—

> There seems to be no doubt but that the only escape from bigotry and lethargy in civic affairs and in legislation, is through the establishment of Catholic study clubs in various sections of our broad land. Hundreds of these clubs have been formed and are in direct communication with the National Council of Catholic Women. In one city alone there are thirty active Catholic study club groups. Thousands of Catholic women who are interested in knowing Catholic principles and the Catholic attitude on social and moral questions are earnestly striving to get this information from approved sources, and the National Council of Catholic Women is happy to be able to help them.

The value of the study club in creating an intelligent public opinion on questions of general concern and in presenting the Catholic attitude on these questions, becomes evident when legislative matters are considered. The National Council of Catholic Women has prepared bibliographies on many and varied subjects, and digests of all legislative measures in which women should be interested have been sent to all its affiliated organizations, together with statements as to the Catholic attitude on such measures, secured through the coöperation of the various departments of the National Catholic Welfare Conference. With other women's organizations, the National Council of Catholic Women has appeared before the judiciary sub-committees of the House and Senate to express its opposi-

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tion to the Equal Rights Amendment, but it was the only one of these organizations which raised a protest against the nefarious birth-control bill which came before the Senate committee during the last session of Congress. This was the action which caused Bishop Schrembs to declare before the delegates assembled in Washington, that the council is "the greatest organization of Catholic women in the United States."

The development of Catholic work, in the parish, the diocese, the state and the nation, and the need for adequate expression of Catholic ideals on social and moral questions, has brought a corresponding demand for Catholic leaders. Realizing that all the work undertaken would be in vain without intelligent leadership, the National Council of Catholic Women has established in Washington the National Catholic School of Social Service to train these leaders. Affiliated with the Catholic University of America, coöperating with Georgetown University in the field of medical social service, accepted as a member of the national associations of training schools for professional social work, counting among its graduates natives not only of the United States but of France, Poland and Belgium, the Philippine Islands and Porto Rico, the National Catholic School of Social Service has been called "the consecrated tabernacle of a great ideal." It is the outstanding achievement of the National Council of Catholic Women—the most valuable contribution which it has made to the work of the Church in America—one which, alone, would have justified its existence. One of the outstanding results of the recent convention was the appointment of a committee to plan for an endowment fund of $600,000 which will place the school on a sound basis.

The National Council of Catholic Women is in constant touch with organizations of Catholic women in Europe as well as some of the countries of South America. Outstanding among the reports presented at the fifth annual convention were those of the delegates who had represented the council at the congress of the International Union of Catholic Women's Leagues, held a few weeks ago in Rome, where their presence led to an important achievement in the appointment of a special immigration section, the chairmanship of which was tendered one of the American representatives. What this international affiliation means to the Catholic women of this country was expressed by the Right Reverend Edward A. Pace in his sermon at the Pontifical Mass which opened the convention. Speaking to the delegates, Dr. Pace said—

> You approach your tasks the more confidently because of your association with the international league in whose convention, through your delegates, you have so recently taken part with credit to yourselves and to the Church in our country. You realize more fully than ever how deeply the Holy Father is concerned for the maintenance of a truly Catholic spirit in every organization of Catholic women.

It is the proud boast of the National Council of Catholic Women, that in all its work, civic, social, legislative and religious, it has maintained its Catholic integrity and has stood uncompromisingly "for the maintenance of a truly Catholic spirit in each and every organization of Catholic women" which has come to make up its national membership.

THE CATHOLIC IMMIGRANT

By MARIE R. OWENS

THE present immigration law, known as the Immigration act of 1924, which went into effect in July, 1924, limits the annual quota of immigration to 2 percent of the number of each nationality resident in the United States in 1890. Not more than 10 percent of any annual quota may be admitted in any month. It is interesting to note that the census of 1890 is used as the basis of the law, rather than the census of 1910; and the rate is reduced from 3 percent of any nationality resident in 1910, to 2 percent resident here in 1890—so that the number of admissible immigrants may be relatively limited. The object of this new law, which is based on nationality rather than individual qualification, is to limit the total immigration quota into the United States to 150,000 each year.

The port of New York is the door through which most of these people from the old world enter the new. Steamer after steamer comes into the harbor each month with countless men, women, and children destined for the Promised Land. Although many of the newcomers immediately join relatives in various parts of the country, the greater number remains in or near New York City.

In December, 1923, Cardinal Hayes, mindful of the dangers, as well as advantages, which confront the newcomer, assigned the responsibility for the follow-up work of the Catholic immigrant within his archdiocese to the New York Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women. Mrs. Michael Gavin, then president and provincial director of the National Council of Catholic Women, was appointed president of the Archdiocesan Council. Two years have passed since the women of the New York archdiocese assumed the great responsibility of caring for their Catholic brethren from other lands—two years of tireless work in the interest of the Catholic who comes to America, seeking the best life has to offer.

The Immigration Bureau of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, through its relations with the

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countries of Europe and through its staff at Ellis Island, is in close contact with Catholics coming to America. The names of immigrants who may need assistance are forwarded to their destination in the United States. The names of those who will settle within the New York archdiocese are referred to the Committee on Immigration of the New York Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women. When these names arrive in the office of the Archdiocesan Council, the work assigned by His Eminence begins. Since the birth of the Archdiocesan Council in 1923, the welfare of 6,838 Catholic immigrants has been entrusted to its care.

Regardless of the country from which she may come, the immigrant will find in some member of the council staff a friend who understands her language. On the active staff are women who speak German, French, Hungarian, Italian, Polish, Ukranian, Czecho-Slovak, Russian, and Spanish. If, by chance, the immigrant speaks still another language, an interpreter is readily found for her. To a stranger in a strange land, what can compare to the inexpressible joy of finding a friend who understands her native tongue? The language is the key to the customs, traditions, hopes, and ambitions of any peoples.

The Church is the strongest connecting link between the old world and the new. The staff worker refers the newcomer to a church where she may hear sermons and go to confession in her native tongue. Several cases of marital difficulty have been satisfactorily adjusted. Because of ignorance or convenience, the civil marriage sometimes is accepted by the persons concerned, and only the tactful persuasion of the case worker brings the couple to a priest.

A recent study made in one of the so-called foreign sections of New York City, revealed that an amazing number of Catholic children receive no religious instruction and, as a result, grow up in absolute ignorance of the faith which is their natural heritage. The campaign which the council has undertaken, with other organizations, to insure every Catholic child attending public school in this section catechetical instruction after school hours, is one of the most significant evidences of the seriousness with which the Catholic women of New York have accepted their mission.

The newcomer is now instructed in the civic responsibility she is to assume. The case worker advises her to take out first-citizenship papers and offers all possible assistance in the citizenship procedure. The Cable act, which requires a woman of foreign birth to secure independent citizenship, is explained carefully. Through the clauses of this act a foreign woman no longer assumes the nationality of her husband, but must secure her own citizenship. The importance of this act was realized in the case of a widow who, not understanding the law, failed to file her own citizenship papers. After her husband's death the tragic result of her ignorance was forced upon her when she was refused a widow's pension because she was not a citizen of the United States.

"The Civics Catechism" on the rights and duties of American citizens, published by the National Catholic Welfare Conference, is invaluable to the case worker. This pamphlet is printed in English, and in bi-lingual form in Arabic, Croatian, French, German, Italian, Lithuanian, Polish, Portuguese, Roumanian, Slovak, Slovenian, and Spanish.

Many of the foreign-born who come to America are well educated. Others have little or no education, and the majority do not have a working knowledge of English. Any person who does not speak English is referred to an English class. The foreigner who already has a knowledge of the language is advised to continue his general education in a free day or night school, elementary, trade or high school. In the East Harlem district, where the educational program is already being carried out, the educational committee organized five classes which were later taken over by the Board of Education, and other classes are now being organized and conducted by the same committee.

Economic distress is not one of the infrequent problems faced by the person who is endeavoring to assist the immigrant. The close coöperation between the associated Catholic charities and the Archdiocesan Council is responsible for the efficient manner in which cases in need of relief are handled.

The archdiocese of New York covers a vast territory. In addition to the three counties in New York City, the geographical divisions include seven other large counties. The area covered by the organization committee presents, in itself, a considerable task. In each county, the council has appointed a representative who is responsible for the progress made within her district.

An intensive plan of local organization is now being instituted, whereby the archdiocese is divided into sections. This division may be a county, city, or some part of the city. A committee on immigration is to be appointed in each section. Much is expected of this unit organization, since it affords an opportunity for each Catholic woman in the archdiocese to participate in the immigration program. Although endless opportunities exist in the national metropolis for Catholic women's activities, the serious handicap of great distances and heavy traffic makes much of the work difficult. The local units will eliminate the necessity for the out-of-town members to visit New York frequently. When the details of organization are complete, a course of study will be issued from the headquarters office for all local units. Intensive instruction will be given in legislation affecting immigration. Before the present immigration law can be fully understood, it is necessary to trace the reasons for and development of immigration in the United States.

The first federal immigration law, passed in 1882, excluded convicts, insane persons, and any who might

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become social dependents. Since this first attempt was made to limit wholesale and unchecked immigration, other laws have been passed as the necessity for them became apparent.

Through the new immigration law, countless numbers are excluded each year. The law is purely arithmetical, however, and some immigration authorities question its merits. To be sure, the severity of the law reduces the proportion of undesirables admitted within the year; but at the same time it also shuts out persons of the finest calibre. An ideal law would seem to be one based on quality rather than quantity.

During the world war, the discovery was made that a serious flaw had appeared in the "Melting Pot." No longer did the trusted crucible blend its ingredients from many lands into one perfect substance. In one camp alone, it was stated that interpreters of forty different languages were necessary. The men, drafted from all corners of the country, wore the same khaki uniform, to be sure, but at times this seemed to be the only bond they had in common.

According to the New York World Almanac, the census of New York state in 1919 showed the existence of fifty-one foreign daily and Sunday publications, with an aggregate circulation of 1,352,430. In 1919, after the war, the number of publications had increased to sixty-four, with an aggregate circulation of 2,157,804. These figures are mute evidence of the significance of the statement made by Gertrude Hill Gavin in Columbia, for October, 1924, when she said—"The Melting Pot needs watching." Is it fair to offer a welcome to the foreigner and then forget him? Should it not be our responsibility to see that he studies English, and learns to read and enjoy American newspapers at least as well as those published in his native tongue?

Mrs. William Brown Meloney, editor of The Delineator, who for years has been a close student of immigration, chose for the title of her address at the second convention of the Archdiocesan Council—The Immigrant—A Defender or an Enemy of the Constitution. In a recent interview, Mrs. Meloney likened the United States unto a test tube into "which are introduced various substances of a foreign nature, designed to make a complete whole." "Any substance," she said, "which does not go into solution might, under certain conditions, cause an unanticipated combustion." A perfect solution cannot be expected with conditions as they exist today. In New York City, information destined to reach the entire population must be printed in twenty-two languages. This incurs tremendous expense and time.

If immigration should stop tomorrow, there still would be more work among the foreign-born already here than any one organization could hope to cover adequately in years. It is one thing to accept a foreigner into the United States, but another to assist that foreigner until he understands English, knows the laws of the land, and is eager to abide by them. Americanization is not only a matter of citizenship papers—it is a long, slow process, and sometimes cannot be completed in one generation.

The New York Archdiocesan Council of Catholic Women realizes the religious and national importance of the trust which Cardinal Hayes placed in its members. In two years, a beginning has been made. Permanent headquarters have been opened at 641 Lexington Avenue, where an executive secretary and a foreign language staff direct the work. A comprehensive survey of the archdiocese has been made and the approximate racial composition ascertained. Contact has been made with important religious and educational agencies in the city. Publicity is sent to the foreign newspapers, and through this medium those who do not read American papers, are reached.

Catholic women of America look back to September, 1919, when the hierarchy of the United States, under the leadership of His Eminence, the late James, Cardinal Gibbons, assembled in Washington, D. C., and officially established the National Catholic Welfare Conference. In March, 1920, Catholic women took their part in this nation-wide movement and banded together under the National Council of Catholic Women. It is as a part of this organization, and with the same leader who was the first president of the National Council, that the New York Archdiocesan Council looks ahead to a work well done. With Cardinal Hayes, the Catholic women of New York realize more and more that—"We are under obligation to serve our fellow man, and especially the immigrant that comes to our gates."

Dust of a Dancer

This is the dust of a dancer;
Now, if a flute should call,
Do you think she would answer,
Or stir at all?

Little brown hands went swinging,
The time of the dance to mark,
Maybe the girl went singing
Into the dark.

Maybe the girl was willing,
Tired of music and men,
To go from the flute's proud shrilling
And not dance again.

It may be that now she is rested—
If we could call her back,
Slim-throated and full-breasted,
Down the dark track!

The years have made her no older,
Youth wins this from death—
The centuries enfold her
Like God's breath.

LOUISE DRISCOLL.

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BEAUX AND MISS NOBODY

By HELEN WALKER

IT WAS with all that startled surprise that comes to the very young on discovering for themselves a truth established since the beginning of the world, that I found that even a nobody can acquire beaux. Profound amazement accompanied the realization that neither beauty, nor charm, nor learning—nor that indefinite term that is used to blanket all that is indefinable—personality—were prerequisites to the acquisition. All that one needed was to be a girl.

True, the quality of the beaux and their intentions might depend somewhat on how favored one had been by the gifts of the gods; but beaux themselves—just beaux—were to be had in abundance by anything walking out in skirts from the alleged protecting walls of alma mater into the great, wide world.

Of that strange, undiscovered world, I suppose the things in skirts that venture into it every year hold widely varying expectations, depending on what they have been led by differing systems of education and home environment to believe that it holds.

My particular skirt fluttered out of convent portals. It was a demure blue serge, purchased by a conscientious parent with a firm mind made up as to "what the young girl should wear;" but it had its hopeful, if unperceived quality, in the red silk lining to its jacket. Within the fastnesses of the convent and before one of those walnut-rimmed convent mirrors made especially to prevent the sin of vanity and reflect only one's worst possible points (which were prominent indeed if four years of convent fare had not seemed tempting to the pseudo-poetic temperament) I had tried on that jacket wrong side out, to determine whether it could be contrived that the flaming silk should not be lost to an admiring world. But the wretched tailor had stitched the seams in such a fashion that we were forced, the red silk lining and I, to succumb reluctantly to "what the young girl should wear."

As she wore it, on that deliciously terrifying, auspicious day of departure, her idea of the world, it is to be presumed, was much the idea of many other convent graduates—and not nearly so unworldly as the graduates of other schools might suppose it to be. Nevertheless, it was a slightly different vision than that held by these latter, for echoes of four years of "Correction Class" (in its way, I believe, quite peculiar to the convent) rang in her ears. She had never been able to determine whether the advice of the extremely wise and very remarkable nun who presided over it had always been meant in earnest. Sometimes it seemed almost to be a subtle lesson in control (for the blackest disgrace awaited one who laughed—or even smiled or nudged) and yet from the lips of this worldly-wise woman fell at times, along with sound advice on all possible social contingencies with which the outside world might be fraught, such admonitions as—"You must always beware of a man wearing a big, black moustache. If he should ever attempt to be familiar with you, you should turn with dignity and say—'Young man, desist.'"

Now for one thing, Mr. Gillette and others had long since seen to it that the day of the "big, black moustache" was ended—and the only one I had ever been privileged to gaze upon up to that time, was one worn by the charming, but grave, Senator Walsh of Montana. I wondered if Sister had him in mind; and when I next saw Senator Walsh I determined to ask him—but courage failed on that occasion, and instead, we talked about the Democratic Convention. But that was years later, and long after I had discovered that even a nobody can have beaux.

Perhaps the discovery came as a greater shock to this convent product than to others, less favored as well as less persecuted than she. I had brothers—older brothers—gripped with the firm determination that all conceit in a younger sister should be exterminated with Mussolini-like firmness. Hence it was that on sending a photograph taken in my first evening dress to a brother in college, he sent it back to me, having scrawled in pen and in imitation of my own handwriting across one corner of it—"Yours, Smush-Face." Whenever a new frock was donned in pride and exhibited to four, cold fraternal eyes, the remark invariably would be—"All right but the face. Can't you try walking backward?" With judgment such as this passed upon one by two brothers, venerable and enlightened by five years' contact with the great world, how could one ever hope to acquire beaux?

And yet, it had to be done, apparently—if for no other reason than that "other girls did it." What more monumental reason exists in any school girl's mind? Gone were the days when one's society was composed almost exclusively of the feminine sex. Now if one depended on girls for companions, it would be a solitary life, for the entire feminine world was accompanied by beaux. What a dreary life! There were times when one wondered if one could not return again to the convent—when the inconspicuous black uniform would have seemed a solace rather than an irritation.

Who shall plumb the depths of anguish of that first year of dances, when escorted by a brother at the command of a parent—almost at the point of a pistol—the nobody went in pink satin slippers that were too tight, and simple pink chiffon dress too full in the skirt (again selected by rote as to "what the young girl should wear") and agonized when she saw the

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beguiling eyes of a two seasons' débutante fall upon her brother? The flesh is weak—and shy little sisters are a handicap at a party. She knew the beguiling eyes would lead him off, and leave her sitting against the wall on a stiff gold chair, deserted. Ah, well, one somehow lives through such trying experiences, though at the time she wondered how. While she was wondering, all the available beaux were being snatched off from under her nose.

There were, in those days, more humiliations than victories. There was, for instance, the invitation to dine and go to the theatre with a young man whose family were endeavoring to "marry him off." They prescribed frequent parties à deux at the theatre, and determinedly provided tickets. Now the young man would far rather have remained at home reading, but being a dutiful son, he did, this particular week, extend two invitations, one to me, and one to my friend, Jane. The plays were of very different character, yet meeting me at a party a week later, he asked seriously if I had seen such-and-such a play—naming the one we had watched together.

"Why, yes," I replied, somewhat surprised, and wondering if he were joking. "I saw it with you."

"Oh, no. That was the play I took Jane to see."

Even though he was an absent-minded youth, I could not, I reflected as I melted, literally, away, have been very stimulating company at the theatre. There was still much to learn. But those were in the serious days, when a party was not to be taken lightly, and the duty to appear at everything—even sometimes church—with one of those favored creatures, a man, was an imperative one.

The first two years being the hardest, and the realization growing that even a nobody could have beaux, such as they were, the tension relaxed gradually, and the importance of beaux in the scheme of things diminished in proportion. It was then that I really began to enjoy not only my own, but those of others, and to recognize for the first time the delicious, perilous proximity of the ridiculous to the romantic.

There was Marian, an extremely attractive friend who was so popular and sought-after that she was continually going to college house-parties, or week-ends in some other state, or comings-out in Washington. Her invitations came from hither and yon, without regard to distance, and she was perpetually traveling. The devoted swain who always put her on the train at home, and was ever there at the station to meet her on her return, was one of the gullible youths for whom the advertisers had composed the slogan—"Say it with flowers." Not being ready of speech, he did—so enthusiastically that his florist had orders to send to my friend at each new destination a large box of roses. Invariably, these always came—but invariably, they were always dead. I was present on several occasions when the boxes were ushered in with ceremony, opened in the fluttering presence of other girls, and the remains viewed—not always reverently. Surely some dire punishment awaits that callous florist for the disregard of his patron's interests, for the withered and desecated blooms, bearing a card on which was inscribed a tender message, such as "Wear these for my sake," or "These make me think of you," finally came to mean to their recipient only laughter. The ridiculous had killed the romantic.

In the course of time, the appalling frequency with which similar catastrophes occurred, caused me to begin to wonder whether a sense of humor was a curse or a blessing. It was to Daphne, a charming friend whose funny-bone was decidedly not paralyzed, to whom a poetic Czecho-Slovakian, recently arrived in America, began paying court. Although his English was almost unintelligible, she told me that she was able to gather that he fancied himself a victim of la grande passion; and since, so she said, he led her to believe that she had inspired it, she naturally considered him a youth possessed of discrimination and taste. He had to go on a journey, and informed her that he would write daily. This somewhat appalled her, for she wondered, as she could scarcely understand his spoken words, how she would ever be able to read the written ones—so she said that it would never do. Pressed for reasons, she lamely remarked that she was sure his letters would be so poetically beautiful that she would be averse to destroying them; but that, on the other hand, she would not like to leave them around where they might be read—perhaps even laughed at. (She, too, had incorrigible brothers, only in her case they were younger—a situation which may be, as Mr. Booth Tarkington has suggested in his stories, worse.) She hinted to him that desecration threatened his letters—for she had no secret place to put treasures of the sort. He had better not try writing at all. Thinking was safer. But she saw that he did not consider this a good plan, and the next day a florist's delivery motor drove up to her door and left a square package. It contained a tin box with lock and key attached—but the box was filled with a growing, short, fern-like plant. A card in her suitor's elaborate Czecho-Slovakian penmanship lay on top. But directly underneath what he had written on it, another callous florist, who was proud of the plant and anxious to classify it, had also written something. So it was that the card read—"For my letters. Won't you please give me in return, a lock of your hair? African moss."

There was once an old philosopher who used to expatiate on the fleeting quality of the "glamour of the amour." I wonder if he did not ascribe its transience to the ridiculous?

Then there was the youth who shone in the reflected glory of a prize café-au-lait bulldog and a red roadster. He came frequently on summer afternoons to invite me to drive, and always the café-au-lait bulldog rode with us. "I want you and Bingo to know one

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another," said his owner, who seemed delighted that the dog and I became congenial at once. Frequently he would ask me (a shade over-solicitously, I thought) how I liked the animal. I was able truthfully to reply that I adored Bingo, and at my repeated declarations of affection for him, his owner seemed oddly delighted. Toward the end of the summer, the youth announced that his parents were closing their house and that they were all going abroad for several months. Did I still adore Bingo? I did. Well then, would I like to keep him during the winter? He only ate a pound of steak a day, chopped fine and mingled with especially ordered dog-biscuit; he had his daily bath, and his exercise hours were from seven to eight, two to three, and nine to ten. And once a fortnight he had to be examined by a specialist just to see that he was quite fit.

Oh, attentive youth! Oh, red motor car! Your only raison d'être in front of my door was to find a trained puppy-nurse for Bingo.

Comparison, the nobody found, is almost as deadly to romance as is the ridiculous. She went one evening, accompanied by a serious-minded youth just out of college, to hear the late Maurice Francis Egan, whom she had previously met on several occasions, speak. When his altogether delightful speech was over, the young man sighed in relief, and said—"Now that that's over, we can talk. Let's talk about something interesting. Let's talk about me." He was interrupted at this moment by someone at my elbow, saying —"Dr. Egan, I would like to present—" "Oh," interrupted Dr. Egan, charmingly, "you needn't bother. You see Miss Nobody is one of the youngest of my oldest friends." It was an unfair comparison, but fate takes no account of fairness and makes no allowances for youth. He had deliberately written the lines of Dr. Egan and the serious-minded boy in cruel proximity, with the fell purpose of killing romance.

It would seem then that convent graduates, faced with the way of the world which, socially, is a way of beaux, and timid about the elusiveness of the notoriously elusive male, should take heart. It is possible, even for a nobody, to acquire these gentle, social necessities—but it is better to aim humbly for quantity rather than quality, and not to inquire too curiously into the motives inspiring their attention. If one aims for quality alone, the beaux will not be many, and it is better to have a reserve force to fall back upon. For Barrie long ago pointed out that What Every Woman Knows is that woman was not fashioned out of man's rib—but out of his funny-bone—which is perhaps why the ridiculous is always waiting for her around the corner, ready to puncture romance at the critical moment by flinging derisively in her face, anything from dead flowers and African moss, to Bingoes.

WHY THE SAINTS?

By VIDA D. SCUDDER

WHY the Church? was the title of a questionnaire recently sent out by an eager association organized to enquire into a Christian way of life. The Catholic thinks he knows the answer; but he is aware that throngs of people are asking that question today, now wistfully, now contemptuously. Why the saints? Here is a cognate question, but one which would not occur to many in the Protestant world. For Protestantism rarely thinks about saints at all. Since the Reformation it has turned its mind away. A few Scriptural saints—seventeen to be accurate—have special days in the Anglican Church, with collect, epistle and gospel; but apart from these no provision is made for commemorating the individual holy ones who shine like stars in the Christian heaven. One lovely day to be sure is set apart for a general commemoration; but All Souls Day has been obscured, and so it is to be feared that most people who are drawn into communion with the unseen in the bright autumn stillness of November first, are thinking quite as much of their own dear and dead—who may not be saints at all—as they are of the radiant array whom the Church has exalted to her altars. The onward moving days, generally speaking, bring to the Protestant no association with saints.

The reason that the Reformation turned away from the rich complexity of commemorations in the mediaeval Church is easy to see. That a danger of sheer polytheism may be involved for simple folk in the veneration of the saints is indubitable; that it is natural to dedicate tender and intimate devotion to them rather than to the Lord of saints, cannot be questioned. The Church is always on her guard against this danger, but she can hardly deny that it exists; and the reformers took, as they often did, the facile short cut of avoiding a danger by abrogating a privilege. They were intensely anxious to perform a most difficult task: to bring men, with no secondary aids, into the direct presence of God. The sacramental sense of the Divine Life mediated through earthly and finite means was alien and repugnant to them; and all those helps of ritual, liturgy and symbolic art, which had been the instinctive language of the soul throughout Christian history, were sternly discarded. The saints went with the rest. And so it came to pass that the heavens grew vacant. Before long, the ordinary Protestant child confronted an earth peopled with warm interesting human beings—and a mysterious other world which was an awful vacuum. Within it, or beyond it, very far away, was enthroned a more awful

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God. He "was everywhere;" He heard every whisper; He knew what little boys and girls were doing, He "loved" them, with an emotion hard for a child to understand; but He had to be reached by prayer or thought across that terrible intervening space.

The angels were there too—quite unrelated to us poor mortals—in a strange heaven, dim and shining; and perhaps one was going to be an angel oneself some day, for one mixed them up sadly with the souls of the dear departed. And there too—here was the great redeeming fact—there was Jesus. But Jesus, be it reverently said, appeared lonely in those great solitudes. Jesus in the Gospels loved people dearly, liked to be with them, enjoyed children, moved among crowds tenderly and at home. But now, those who had loved and followed Him were lost in that great emptiness which it was irreverent to try to people; and thought was vague as it tried to picture things, to bring Him near.

So the years went on. Science was all the time enlarging our physical universe, leading us to contemplate the grand realities of stellar depths with their vast and rhythmed glories. It has continued to this moment, deepening more and more our amaze at life, and "wakening a sort of soul in sense," to use a Shelleyan phrase. We have a mysticism of our own. But when all is said, it leaves us matter-bound and earth-bound still. The secularization of life has gone on apace; it would almost seem to have reached its climax today; and the universe of the spirit has become to nearly everyone in the great non-Catholic world, a sort of luminous void.

Meanwhile, perhaps the saints are laughing at us, and crying over us too, from that strange plane where they abide; a plane where the energies of the spirit are not imprisoned in matter, at least as matter is known to us. They are saying that if only we would pay attention to them once more, we should find our universe much more satisfactory, our apprehension of reality immensely enlarged.

We know little about that other plane; but we realize that it exists, and is intimately related to our mental life. And we perceive that the old Protestant way of veiling it in a sort of religious mist is unfortunate. As imagination insists on pressing into that far experience which we are so soon to share, it finds a world not less but more tenanted than our own. We cannot define the life that obtains there; we must use human words to indicate the multiplicity of the forms it surely assumes. Probably the terminology of Holy Writ is as good as any. No clear idea is conveyed by the resounding terms, thrones, dominions, principalities, powers: but consolation comes, and a reverent sense of grateful intimacy, when we read of the spirits of just men made perfect. The Church tells us that communication between that plane and our own is not cut off; Dante well understood when he made his Manfred say, "Qui per quei di la molto s'aiuta," and stress throughout his Purgatorio the yearning of blessed wistful souls for the help of earthly prayers—even as the prayers of the saints ascend for those on earth forever.

For of all the denizens of that world of light, the saints seem nearest to us. One has hazy ideas about the life after death of Napoleon or Julius Caesar; divorced from the things of time, what can they find to do? But one is sure that Teresa or Francis de Sales or the Curé of Ars are happily busy. Their interests even here below belonged to eternity, and would only be enhanced by escaping thither; and we can picture them to ourselves in the other world with no loss of identity, because the kind of things they cared for here, they are likely, if there is another world at all, to go on caring for there.

To put the same thing in other words, the saints while here on earth were far more truly alive than other people. Saints are not negative creatures, though the naughty world, which wants to think evil more vivid than goodness, always pretends that they are. Saints were the most vital people of their day, so vital that one can not possibly think of them as dead. They led highly picturesque lives, presenting great variety; they made a tremendous impression on their contemporaries, so tremendous that all sorts of stories, true and sometimes doubtless false, were handed down about them. Many people do not realize this vitality of the saints. They picture them standing monotonously, carrying their emblems, in stained glass windows, or absorbed in a wearisome and unmodern round of mortifications and ecstasies. The trouble is with the way their lives have usually been written. Hagiology is dreary reading for the most part. To be sure, the student can find plenty of delightful legendary lore, whether in literature or art: predellas, illuminations, ivories, the stories of the Golden Legend, of numberless other compilations, a treasure house of celestial fairy tales which the world is sadly the poorer for rejecting. But when it comes to the nobler aspects of sanctity, to the true record of exalted lives, how dull is often the presentation! And how unnecessary the dullness! Many exceptions come to mind. Gardner's Saint Catherine of Siena is a living woman to us; so is the other Catherine, of Genoa, in Von Hügel's magnificent book; so is Saint Jane de Chantal, in her Letters as translated by the Sisters of the Visitation; so is Saint Teresa. Doubtless there are many other brilliant biographies; but by and large everyone will probably agree that the conventional biographies of saints ancient or modern are curiously dismal reading.

And it is a pity. For recovery of interest in the saints would be particularly wholesome. Nothing could more invigorate the imagination, or help us more to escape that imprisonment in sense which so grievously obtains in the western world. We are passing through a discouraged moment in history. Cynicism febrile or forlorn has assumed control of the arts;

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politics make the idealist wince; religion instead of augustly claiming men's allegiance, is too often apologetically on the defensive. This is a time if ever there were one, when attention should be directed toward the people who have been intensely aware of things beyond sense, when examples of spiritual heroism and faith triumphant should spur us on. Oh, for fewer victims of Main Street, whining over lack of inspiration in their environment, oh, for more studies of the glorious men and women who through all sordidness and murk have pressed onward to their God, Him alone desiring! Saints were real. They lived, they live. If we could but turn the gaze of youth toward them! And if we will, we can.

How? Well, it is not likely that at one blessed stroke we can recover effective belief in the communion of saints for the public at large. That rare mystical fellowship is probably beyond the reach of any but the practising Catholic; fortunate is he! Too long have they been empty for the rest of us, those far mysterious spaces; too dead our ears to catch the heavenly harmonies. But what can be done is to turn toward the saints in history. If we gained more adequate knowledge of them as actual men and women, an atmosphere would be created in which Catholics could grow. The saints should be given back to the world, and Catholics are the people who ought to do it.

The revival of historical studies should help. So should the arresting methods of the new school of biography, of men like Strachey. There is no possible reason why hagiology should be arid. A Protestant pastor rediscovered Saint Francis a good many years ago. He stimulated others; and now from Jörgenson and Father Cuthbert, to Chesterton and Housman, delightful books make Francis live for us. He is a fascinating person, Saint Francis, and the Protestant world has adopted him—though it rarely occurs to anyone to follow him. But there are other saints; sometimes I get a little jealous for them.

Why can't we have more vivid readable biographies of holy men and women? Would it do any harm if they were clever—if they had the modern knack of penetration to the quick of personality, to the distinctive points of character? Saints have character! They are not made up of sentimentalities and raptures, they are simply the men and women who have known the adventure of the inner life, which is the most exciting there is, more perfectly than other people. Their faults should not be blinked; they had faults aplenty, horrid ones, from David down, and they can stand frank treatment. The supernatural element in their lives should never be minimized. What use? It is there; and nothing is more important for us than familiar knowledge of persons who had established sure and evident contacts with the supernatural world. The normal recognition of continuity between our plane of being and the Eternal, would be wonderfully fostered if we knew the saints better. Lives of them written in the light of all the knowledge given by modern psychology, with the keen touch now demanded from biographical work, might have a unique fascination, and render a unique service: for they might fill that strange vacancy which for so many begins when physical substance ends, with rich and ordered glory.

This is an epoch of series. Why not a new series of saintly lives, written by Catholic scholars and authors of distinction? Incidentally, such a series if rightly conceived, might almost form a consecutive history of Christianity as viewed from within. Christian history in last analysis is less concerned with doctrines or events than with life, and the life which flows from the doctrines is what this series would help the world by manifesting anew. Why the saints? Their lives are the answer. Bring that answer home to the public heart, and the question, Why the Church? will be answered.

From a Book of Meditations

WE speak of the "mysteries of faith," and the necessity of accepting without fully understanding—as though mysteries existed in the supernatural order alone. But where indeed does mystery begin? And when does it end? Does not all that we know begin in mystery—and all that we are, vanish into it? Is not the material universe, with all its elements, a profound, an inconceivable mystery? Are we not mysteries to ourselves? Life is a mystery, and all being. Matter is a mystery, no less than thought. The body scarcely less mysterious than the soul. We move in a universe of wonders—in a universe, itself a supreme wonder—and discern mystery only here and there!

Man "lives by faith" in the natural order, as well as in the supernatural; for "natural" and "supernatural" are only names, and the one blends with the other, and no scientist, no philosopher, however learned, can tell us where one begins and the other ceases. All things are "supernatural" to the heart that seeks all in God. And all things are "natural" to the heart that seeks all in self.

Let us then awaken to the fact that man lives in—and is himself—a mystery, and that the "mysteries of faith" are only a few of those incomprehensible realities which he is impelled, by the exercise of right reason, to accept. Belief in the Incarnation, with all its consequences—and belief in the latest scientific theory, with all its consequences—involves equally an act of faith.

Oh, mystery of Divine love, enlighten all hearts that seek Thee! Oh, Luminous, oh, Incomprehensible Fact, enlighten all minds that draw near Thee, that, loving Whom they feel to be Love, and adoring Whom they see to be True, they may indeed understand Thee, with the understanding of the soul that finds Thee in humility and trust.

Humility is the beginning of wisdom, and the consummation of love. I, who discourse at such length upon humility, am not truly humble—and in saying so many things about love, do not deeply love. I fear lest, in seeking Thee thus in prayer, I am deluding myself, and appearing to myself better than I am—when in reality I am nothing—but am further from Thee, O Beauty that diminishes not—than those who do not pray to Thee at all, but who serve Thee—however unconsciously—more sincerely than I by living lives of self-sacrifice and simplicity.

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AGNES REPPLIER, ESSAYIST

By MARY KOLARS

IT IS easier to enjoy Miss Repplier's achievements than to classify them. Her passion for books, the variety of her literary information and the skilled and solid judgments which she is able to lay down, would tempt one simply to identify her with our superior academic criticism. But the eighteen volumes which have emanated from her pen since she began to publish in 1888, contain abundant evidence of extra-academic proclivities. Her papers of general social comment, for instance, comprise as bulky a total as her literary essays; and there are, besides, such miscellanies as a monograph on her native Philadelphia, the biography of a physician, an anthology, two volumes (delectable things!) on cats, and a solitary group of narrative sketches which probably contains her best work, entitled In Our Convent Days. This is what the English call (I think) "not knowing where to have a writer." The best way out of the difficulty is to forego any attempt at unified definition, and just say what it is one likes.

When I begin by confessing that Miss Repplier pleases me best in her "unsocial" work, I do not mean that I slight her service in the social field. It is hard to imagine a more pouncing common sense, a more alert and incisive faculty for comment on the passing stream of events, than she has brought to bear in the last two decades of our national history. If, as one is sometimes inclined to suspect, she knows more than any other living scholar about the age of Fanny Burney and Mrs. Montagu and Sir Walter Scott, and more than any two or three other living scholars about those curiosities of literature at large—letters, chronicles and obscure diaries—this has not prevented her from going exhaustively into such subjects as feminism and police court statistics and diplomatic records and juvenile laws and educational reform; or from deciding with the greatest definiteness what she thinks of the problems in which these various facts are implicated. Her observation and counsel have long been a valued note in the national symposium of social criticism; and I am willing to admit that a writer, capable of producing such tonic papers as those which fill the volumes entitled Points of Friction, Americans and Others, Counter-Currents and the recently published Under Dispute, should continue to produce them as a civic duty.

But I speak narrowly and selfishly. My own personal wish is, not so much to be braced by practical truths, however timely and watchful, however wholesomely biting and immitigably sane, as to be delighted by the vagaries of a rich and individual scholarship. No one else can compare books for me as Miss Repplier can, for no one else reads so many. No one else, more particularly, can induct me into the strange and forgotten corners of literature, for no one else knows anything about them. Where else can I turn to find out what James Howell said the Spaniard said after falling down and breaking his nose? Or what a sulky critic in Blackwood's said about the amount of kissing in one of Miss Susan Warner's novels? Or what St. Chrysostom wrote from Caesarea about his bread and his bath? Or what those deciduous immortals of the happy half-century which has given its title to one of Miss Repplier's choicest books—what Miss Hannah More, Mrs. Hemans, Miss Anna Seward (the Lichfield Sawn), Mr. William Hayley and Dr. Erasmus Darwin—wrote and thought and did? The pages of these essays are freighted with a thousand precious curiosities lovingly brought to light and lingered on; and the gliding humor and rightness of Miss Repplier's comments makes them even more unforgettable than her noteworthy pronouncements on major writers.

Professor Brander Matthews has ranked Miss Repplier with the late Andrew Lang. Few will dispute that she stands close to Lang in excellence, and many will see the bond between them in those leisurely historico-literary saunterings which have been the favorite pastime of each. But there are other suggestions as well in Miss Repplier's pages. There is more than an echo of Johnsonian common sense, to prove that her praise of that great and good man rests on a real moral affinity; and the peculiar finish of phrase in which she cloaks her thrusts recalls sometimes the urbane effectiveness of her admired Augustine Birrell and sometimes the nipping neatness of her adored Jane Austen.

She recently characterized the spirit of Sir Wilfrid Scawen Blunt's Diaries thus—"Blunt's quarrel was with his country, his world, his fellow-creatures and his God—a broad field of dissatisfaction, which was yet too narrow to embrace himself."

A paper written on feminism, in the critical year 1894, characteristically tempered her genuine enthusiasm for the new development with the following sound aspiration—"Perhaps the time may even come when women, mixing freely in political life, will abandon that injured and aggressive air which distinguishes the present advocate of female suffrage. Perhaps, oh, joyous thought! the hour may arrive when women, having learned a few elementary facts of physiology, will not deem it an imperative duty to embody them at once in an unwholesome novel"—an aspiration, by the way, which not even the present millennium seems perfectly to have fulfilled.

Speaking elsewhere of the hopelessness of attempting to rehabilitate any historical character to whom a graphic, if unreliable, tradition has attached itself, she cites the case of Lucrezia Borgia and murmurs comprehensively—"The image of an attractive young woman poisoning her supper guests is one which the world will not lightly let go." In another essay she scores off the Cromwellian with shrewd humor—"We know that what the English Puritans especially resented in Prince Rupert was his insistence on regimental prayers. They could pardon his raids, his breathless charges, his bewildering habit of appearing where he was least expected or desired; but that he should usurp their own especial prerogative of piety was more than they could bear."

She fixes two of her favorite heroines permanently in our imagination by remarking, of one—"She [Emma Woodhouse] is a normal creature, highly civilized and sanely artificial," and of the other—"Of Beatrix Esmond it might be said that Thackeray was the only man who never succumbed to her charms."

An essay written in 1915 began by voicing with dry perfection what all readers were inarticulately feeling—"The only agreeable thing to be recorded in connection with Europe's sudden and disastrous war is the fact that people stopped talking about women and began to talk about men," and there is a lapidarian finish to this diagnosis of a modern American disease—"The artisan, with impulses and ambitions as ignoble and as unintelligent as the millionaire's, is sullenly aware that, waste as he may, the rich can waste more, and he is still dissatisfied."

Nor is Miss Repplier always making epigrams. In contemplating the ways of that beloved beast the cat, for instance (Loti and Gautier alone have matched the exquisite things she has said about cats in her Fireside Sphinx), she relaxes into a much less disciplined mood. Consider the gaiety and grace of the following description of the tyranny of a pet—

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"I own that when Agrippina brought her first-born son and established him in my bedroom closet, the plan struck me at the start as inconvenient. I had prepared another nursery for the little Claudius Nero, and I endeavored for a while to convince his mother that my arrangements were best. But Agrippina was inflexible. The closet suited her in every respect; and with charming and irresistible flattery, she gave me to understand, in the mute language I knew so well, that she wished her baby boy to be under my immediate protection . . . After a few weak remonstrances, the futility of which I clearly understood, her persistence carried the day. I removed my clothing from the closet, spread a shawl upon the floor, had the door taken from its hinges, and resigned myself, for the first time in my life, to the daily and hourly companionship of an infant."

A separate word should be said of In our Convent Days, a book which makes one wonder why Miss Repplier did not add narrative-writing to her repertoire. These sketches render with complete convincingness and charm the quality of happy, natural, Catholic childhood. Here we have none of the pious unreality with which writers of edifying fourth-class novels love to gild their remembrances of convent boarding-school life. We have a real school, filled with unmistakably real little girls, and taught by nuns refreshingly possessed of the authentic outlines of humanity.

The only child who might be summoned out of the long roll of letters to compete in believableness with the Agnes and Elizabeth and Tony of In Our Convent Days is Jim, the (one supposes) fictitious youngster in Initiation; and even that small and engaging barbarian is given us only in flashes, whereas the little girls of Miss Repplier's recital keep us company for a whole book—falling in love with the young seminarian who serves as acolyte, stealing the straws from under the Bambino, lightening the silence of retreat with "spiritual conversation" (who can forget how Elizabeth, after reading Agnes a description of pride, said meditatively, "I think that's Adelaide's predominant passion?") and smoking smuggled cigarettes with disastrous results. And how persuasive, against this recognizable background, are the flashes of these imps' real innocence and devoutness! Take the following casual account of the author's inability to understand why the extinction of a particular candle on the Madonna's altar should have been esteemed a disgrace to the class to which the candle belonged—

"I had not imagination enough to grasp the importance of a candle more or less upon the altar. It was useless to appeal to my love of the Blessed Virgin. I loved her so well and so confidently, I had placed my childish faith in her so long, that no doubt of her sympathy ever crossed my mind. My own mother might side with authority . . . But in every trouble of my poor little gusty life, the Blessed Mother sided with me. Of that, thank Heaven! I felt sure."

Surely this is worth acres of the stereotyped order of sentimental religious fiction.

It is pleasant to know that appreciation of the distinguished achievement of this Catholic essayist has been widespread. It was not only Andrew Lang who "keenly relished" her work. The contents of her regularly appearing volumes are reprinted from the leading periodicals of the day. Nor has formal recognition been lacking. Miss Repplier was made a doctor of letters by the University of Pennsylvania, in 1902; she received the Notre Dame Laetare Medal, in 1911; and on June 17 of this year, she was given the degree of doctor of laws by Yale University—distinctions which doubtless will be followed by others.

A COMMUNICATION

THE LEAGUE OF NATIONS

Los Angeles, Cal.

TO the Editor:—From week to week, as I have read the editorial comment and other articles on international affairs, I have noticed in The Commonweal a growing willingness to be fair to the League of Nations. For this, I am profoundly appreciative. Too many papers, including Catholic ones, evince a cruel readiness to stress "failures" as though each one was final and to ignore successes, even to discredit those successes that cannot be ignored.

It is true that I have waited, so far, in vain, for that article by a friendly critic of the League, such as Alfred Zimmern.

But I appreciate your present evident desire to be just to this newborn child of international coöperation whose survival and whose growth mean much to the welfare of mankind. This child needs nurture as all young things do, especially since it was born into a world just emerging from the scourge of the greatest war of history with the inevitable aftermath of national selfishness and with a tradition of physical combat that has existed for centuries.

I do not mean to find fault today, but rather to discuss with you in a very friendly spirit your advocacy of an "American" league modeled on the "European" league, which proposition I read in The Commonweal of November 11.

This proposal has very serious implications, it seems to me. I have no criticism to make of regional pacts when these are within a world wide organization which unites all mankind in essentials of human welfare.

But to advocate a "European" league and an "American" league in contradistinction means that the world is to be divided again—into larger units, it is true, but, none the less, divided and into units that may be more dangerous and formidable because of their size. The inevitable corollary of a "European" league and an "American" league will be an "Asiatic" league.

It seems to me that the hope of mankind in the temporal order lies in the world wide League of Nations which fifty-five nations are now nurturing in spite of obstacles and with a remarkable measure of success when one considers all the circumstances, including the absence of the United States.

The South American countries, all of whom except Ecuador, are members of the League of Nations, seem well satisfied. The same is true of the countries of North America, except Mexico and the United States. These American members of the League have suffered no interference nor have their sovereignties been impaired. They are treated as equals in Geneva and they are doing their part well. They have not been involved in any unpleasantness in Europe.

On the contrary, the United States, under the Monroe doctrine, does not treat them as equals. This self-assumed guardianship, as practised, has been a thorn in their side for many years. They feel a stronger kinship with Europe than with us; such has been my impression from contact with individual South Americans. Our civilization, too, is European.

In the spiritual order all nations meet in the church universal; in the temporal order, all nations should have a meeting place where common problems may be discussed in all those matters of common human concern.

The great effort of those who believe in the doctrine of Christian neighborliness should be directed to ways and means of uniting the world, of relating the parts to the whole.

MARY J. WORKMAN.

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POEMS

Consort

The lovely moon, who has the world to roam in,
The world of sky without a trail or track.
The lovely moon still finds herself at home, in
The little pool beside our cedar shack.

O moon, who puts aside the world's far splendor,
O moon, who thrusts aside the heaven's charms!
The great and starry worlds that would befriend her
She waves away, to lie within the arms

Of this, the humble mountain pool, unshining
Save with her whiteness, as she runs to lay
Her face against him, all her bright hair twining
About his bosom, till the trump of day.

O moon, who gives the world, and gains, in losing,
A shelter from your greatness for a while,
I know, I know the reason for your choosing.
I, only I, quite understand your smile.

MARY CAROLYN DAVIES.

Upon an Open Hand

I hold my joy upon an open hand
Resting as light as lovely thistledown,
Lest He, in Whom all veering winds are known,
Remember something very deeply planned
And strive to make my spirit understand
How every flying joy is still His own.
I close no piteous fingers. Time has blown
Through many a clenchéd grip at His command.

Take it, grave winds, according to His whim;
He need not wound me, tearing it away
As from a stubborn child whose puny will
Clings to the toy he knows. I lift to Him
The open hand that trembles to obey,
The emptiness that He delights to fill.

MARGUERITE WILKINSON.

San Francesco d'Assisi

I will move quietly within this place,
Where God reveals His soul so wondrously
In bird and flower and brook and wind and tree,
In sun and sky, the glory of His face.
I will go silently, alone; and still
Not quite alone, for what is that—a mist?
Perhaps—but here, I think, he keeps the tryst:
A little grey-robed figure on the hill.
I know the healing hands, the brave, clear eyes;
I hear the gentle voice. O robins, sing!
And to his heart belovéd memories bring
Of happy days beneath Italian skies.
Dear God, what miracle is this? I see
Leaves, softly silver, from an olive tree!

CATHERINE PARMENTER.

New England Town House

Someone must move behind the green shutters,
Someone must breathe within the white walls;
The grass is shaved and no paper clutters
The path; the three steps are scrubbed for calls.

Gladioli stand in a red line
And pink sweet-william behind the screen
Of soldier poplars, of elms and pine
That blur the house in a web of green.

No motion here, no change and no storm,
Save it be a robin spreading wing;
The droop of trees make shadow and form
On the gold grass and the shadows swing.

Someone alive knew how to use paint
And composed this house in leaves and sun;
But it differs from death by the faint
Stir of one leaf down the air—just one.

MARIE LUHRS.

Old Youth

There is a frantic radiance in leaves
That quiver to the surge of drumming rain.
The wind is crying round about the eaves,
Tugging at empty nests—the weather-vane
Teeters, uncertain, and is still again.
The hayricks sag beneath the weight of sheaves
That robbed the stubbled meadows of their grain—
Summer is over and the swallow grieves.

Summer is over in the heart of me—
Summer was love, but autumn broods despair.
Autumn is old youth that defiantly
Has braided garish ribbons in her hair—
Rustling her gaudy charms with conscious mien,
Knowing that winter hovers, white and lean.

GERTRUDE CALLAGHAN.

The Hem of a Garment

It passes, and each white, sun-gazing height
Reflects the glow that shone on Tabor's crest;
It moves upon the tides that never rest;
Far down the valley in the shaded light
Where violets hold the dewy tears of night;
It covers every birdling in its nest,
Each babe asleep upon its mother's breast,
Each kindly thought concealed from mortal sight;
Effulgent source where hidden well-springs flow—
Full throbbing pulse close to the heart of life—
The Seamless Garment circling all the globe!
If sad-eyed, weary-footed throngs could know
To touch the hem is peace amid the strife—
The many colored hem of God's white robe!

MARIE BUEHRLE.

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THE PLAY AND SCREEN

By R. DANA SKINNER

Shaw's Androcles

IT IS almost pathetic to see Bernard Shaw dissect himself in public. He is so unconscious of what he is doing, so certain that he is dissecting everyone but himself, so merciless with his knife of wit because he does not see its double edge. And all the time he is telling you in unmistakable terms just why he has never been more than a clever man, and why the mantle of greatness has always eluded him.

His trouble is fear—a deep, tremulous fear of facing the truth and the strength of his own intuitive convictions and beliefs. You probably know a good many people like him. They toy with surface truths. But when it comes time to tell you what they really believe, they will throw you aside with a jest, afraid to let you see within them because they are afraid to look there themselves.

Hence you will find Mr. Shaw drawn irresistibly to the heroic—and promptly reducing heroism to its most ridiculous terms. You will find him fascinated by a pearl—and then telling you that a pearl is only the absurd defensive secretion of a slimy oyster. You will find him, in Androcles and the Lion, awed almost to reverence by the faith of the early Christian martyrs, and then reducing it to nothing but an emotional hysteria expressed in half-a-dozen individual forms.

As it so happens that Mr. Shaw's religious instincts are his most highly developed ones, it follows as a matter of course that in Androcles he violates them with an almost ferocious intensity. You see that he profoundly disturbed by the more obvious hypocrisies of Christianity as he has watched it practised about him. You see that in a curious way he has a fine contempt for purely emotional religious expression, for the smug and self-satisfied, for the expression that is merely a concealed pride or that thrives on a holier than thou attitude. You realize that he would be a great admirer of Saint Francis of Assisi, without his knowing exactly why. But you also realize that he is unwilling to ask himself the great question whether he himself is a Christian or simply a deist. He is so afraid of what the answer might be, and of the terrific consequences it would have in his life, that he takes refuge in ridicule, satire and broad irreverent farce. Afraid to ridicule Christianity, he ridicules Christians. He cannot avoid the subject. It has won a compelling mastery over him. But he can and does avoid facing the issue. And in exposing his own timorousness, he is dissecting himself far more cruelly than the Christian straw men he sets up and carves open on the stage.

There are enough people in the world today obsessed by this identical fear or cowardice to insure an audience for Androcles that will pronounce it vastly amusing. They will rush gleefully down the avenue of escape that Shaw opens to them. But to anyone who loves bravery and deep conviction, even when expressed in sparkling comedy, Androcles must always seem a mass of insincere and inexcusable drivel, shot through here and there by a self-revealing phrase which shows the nobility of thought from which Shaw mockingly retreats. And if, by any chance, you do not understand the pitiable weakness of the author, and judge only the result of his work without reference to its cause, you have every right to feel that Shaw has committed the unpardonable offense of ridiculing something sacred about which he knows nothing.

Just why the Theatre Guild should make itself a party to this offense is a matter of conjecture. As an organization, it is certainly unhampered by other than professional ethics. It has never shown any interest in the broader question of whether any art can be genuine or worth perpetuating which springs from moral confusion, from questionable taste, or, as in Shaw's case, from the insincerity of cowardice. It has committed itself this year to a sort of sub-season of Shaw repertory, of which Androcles is the second offering. One can almost hear the Guild management saying that it is a "deucedly clever and amusing play"—and so it is if you think, as the Guild must think, that the faith of the martyrs is the right kind of thing to be clever about—or if your sophisticated worship of Shaw and your desire to be his darling interpreter in America lead you to an attitude of amused contempt toward those who still hold certain facts of history and faith in reverence and honor. The Guild is still seeking a blanket endorsement of its judgment in the form of season subscriptions. In view of its present bootlicking of Shaw, and the total lack of sound judgment that that exhibits, I do not see how anyone believing in enduring standards of art, and of ethics in art, can support the Guild except as individual productions warrant. No matter what occasional fine flashes the thoughtful person may discover in Androcles—those moments when Shaw betrays his deeper instincts—the tone of it, and its pervading philosophy, make it one of his worst plays. The Guild has done an ungenerous thing in bringing it back to life.

The Guild production itself exaggerates the farcing of early —and, as Shaw intends it, modern—Christianity. There is one bit of acting, however, that merits real consideration, that of Edward G. Robinson as Caesar. I doubt if an actor has ever caught up in a few inspired moments more of the hollow, pasty imbecility of the degenerating Roman empire.

The Beautiful City

RICHARD BARTHELMESS and Dorothy Gish both have qualities which should make any film in which they appear jointly exhibit a modicum of distinction. But lest you think that the star system always tends to improve the quality of motion pictures, let me warn you that The Beautiful City is about as bald a piece of trash as I have seen in a considerable period of movie-going.

I noted with considerable interest that the story was "written for the screen." In theory there is no reason why stories should not be written directly for this medium as well as for the stage, for magazines, or for printed volumes. Where the theory breaks down at present is apparently in the lack of training and tradition of the possible screen writers. The stage and the written word are as ancient as civilization. The movies are still in rompers. Which means, for the moment, that there is a certain salutary effect in testing the intrinsic worth of a story in acted or written form before unloading it on a motion picture factory. Adaptation to screen limitations is apt to be less dangerous than the direct creative effort seeking an outlet in strange surroundings. The exceptional genius may arise who can work directly and well in "shots" and "continuities" and the demands of pantomime. But the experiments of the others are apt for some time to prove as disastrous as Mr. Goulding's in

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The Beautiful City. This story is to the movies what the old cheap melodrama was to the stage. It provokes chiefly laughter from an average audience.

A Vivid Twelfth Night

AN INVALUABLE lesson in what consistent and thorough training can do to enliven the stage awaits anyone fortunate enough to witness Twelfth Night as produced at the little American Laboratory Theatre, where artists of the Moscow theatre have for a year or more been training a group of young American actors. Can you imagine the delight of seeing people on the stage who actually know what to do with their hands and feet during pauses? Or who can make the gesture of a hand tell as much as a spoken word? Or who can hold you entranced by the sheer exuberance of their simulated good spirits without the obvious and fatal trick of trying to project their "individual personality" across the lights? To anyone interested in the little theatre movement, or in the possibilities of training local talent, it is worth a trip to New York to see what these Russian trainers have done with their material in so short a space of time. But what perverse impulse has led them to make of Shakespeare's quite reverent character of the priest in Twelfth Night a repulsive travesty? Consideration for others has its place—even in art.

In Selecting Your Plays

Accused—A fine Belasco cast, headed by E. H. Sothern, in an absorbing play of Brieux's.
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The New Charlot Review—You can save money by not going.
The Poor Nut—One good hippodrome scene and little else.
The School for Scandal—A rather dreary and monotonous revival of Sheridan's classic.
The Vortex—Starts anywhere and ends nowhere, but has good theatrical quality in two scenes.
These Charming People—Cyril Maude and Edna Best tip-toeing on Arlen débris.
Young Woodley—A lyric and courageous play for a limited and mature audience only.

BOOKS

Memories of Ninety Years, by Mrs. E. M. Ward. Edited by Isabel G. McAllister. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $5.00.

IT WERE unkind to bear upon this book with the light of too cold criticism. An old lady, a very British old lady, a very dear and distinguished old lady, having rounded the corner of ninety, has sat down to tell the public all about it and produced a large and handsomely illustrated volume in which a zest for reminiscence is more notable than a saving sense of proportion.

The essentials in this account are that Henrietta Mary Ada, the daughter of George Raphael Ward, printer and engraver, was born on the first of June, 1832; that at fourteen she was betrothed to Edward Matthew Ward, a rising young artist; and at sixteen was married and settling down to a career of painting and rearing children; that both she and her husband received commissions from royalty and in due time were elected members of the Royal Academy; that at the death of Edward in 1879 she started a school for painters; that her son Leslie became the cartoonist "Sly" on the staff of Vanity Fair; that she survived the shock of the late war, was "thrilled" by an air raid; that throughout the manifold changes and chances of this terrestial existence she has borne a sweet and almost sprite-like disposition, an armor proof against disaster's thrust; and finally that she would gladly put the clock back if she could, and live life over. These are the bare facts, which, interwoven with a wealth of detail and circumstance, make a colorful if indiscriminate pattern.

Husband and wife are painting in their London home when word comes that the Queen and Prince Consort are calling to inspect the work which Edward is executing for the House of Commons. There is great commotion; flowers are ordered and the rooms garnished. The dread moment arrives; "a laughing girl with large blue eyes, sunny hair and a sweet smile" stands before them. The Prince makes friends with the children; the frescoes are admired and two pictures commissioned —Napoleon the Third Invested with the Order of the Garter, and The Visit of Queen Victoria to the Tomb of Napoleon the First. Or they are sound asleep when, in the middle of the night, a violent rapping is heard on the shutters. It is a student come to tell Edward that he has been elected to the Royal Academy. Or Mrs. Ward is painting in Windsor Castle and drinking wine with her luncheon because it is "the Queen's wish," or roaming through the library that is haunted by the ghost of Elizabeth. Or she is giving us her views on spiritualism; or listening to the stern words of Mrs. Wilkie Collins on women and careers; or getting England accustomed to a new hat from Paris and being jeered at by small boys; or noting the peculiarities of genius as typified in Lord Lytton; or being introduced to Turner (Whistler she apparently did not know) and describing him as "a bent and wizened little figure, morose and eccentric."

The goodly company of all Victorian memoirs troop casually across these pages—actors, artists, writers, men of affairs. Some day these figures will cease to walk. The last person who knew them will have passed to the great beyond. But in the meanwhile they are earth-bound, must remain within call and appear with those manners to which we are used—Dickens with his quick perception, Lewis Carroll with his ineffable shyness, Thackeray with his impenetrable hauteur.

A progressive in most other matters, this author is an un-

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swerving conservative when it comes to art. "I am glad to remember my husband's aims in painting," she writes. "As a student of history everything connected with the past had a fascination for him, and he was deeply imbued with the idea that art held responsibilities; that the painter was merely the trustee to hand on the legacy of art to others. He never began a work without being persuaded that it had the right elements to teach some truth, and I think this aspect of art's mission should not be overlooked. In present days I find too many painters are ready to excuse the poverty or absence of the idea in their pictures by saying—'I don't want to preach a sermon in paint; I hope only to give enjoyment to the eye.' "

She was a friend of Millais and admired his work, but has little to say about the Pre-Raphaelites as a group. On that movement whose symbol was the sunflower, she expresses herself thus—"In the 'seventies there was a little revolution in art, which affected no one but amateurs, called the Aesthetics, headed by Oscar Wilde. They carried lilies and called everything they liked 'too utterly utter,' or 'too-too sweet,' and those who did not belong to their band were dubbed Philistines." Modern futurism, cubism, post-impressionism are given rating as "neo-idiocy," and their disciples put in the same class with the Aesthetics. "Without either capacity or vision, they are out for notoriety and remind me of my old nursery bogey, 'spring-heeled Jack,' a crazy man, leaping in the dark to astonish and frighten the public."

But the charm of these memories lies in the record they leave of full and joyful lives. Mr. and Mrs. Ward were not only devoted to each other but shared a common purpose. Creative endeavor was their interest, their labor, and their pleasure. They were surrounded by rare and admirable friends, and to crown all was the smile of sovereign favor. They were free and uninhibited. They did not chew their pencils or throw away their palettes in fits of anger and disgust. "The artistic temperament" and "self-expression" had not been invented, and wielding a brush appears as simple a matter to this couple as it did to Stevenson when he compared it to the tortuous process of writing. Too great contentment of course carries its penalty; and the penalty the Wards paid was a blissful unawareness of those liberalizing forces that were sweeping forward and leaving them behind. They continued to turn out large and awful tableaux long after the day of their vogue. This is a heavy penalty at the bar of poetic justic, but it does not obliterate the picture this book has painted of two craftsmen happy at their work.

LANDON M. ROBINSON.

Poets and Pilgrims, by Katherine Brégy. New York: Benziger Brothers. $1.90.

THE high points in Miss Brégy's charming book, Poets and Pilgrims, are the chapters devoted to Ernest Dowson, Katherine Tynan Hinkson, Father Tabb, Joyce Kilmer and Louise Imogen Guiney: for it is in treating these figures in our literature that Miss Brégy's cultivated experiences and critical acumen are most valuable to the reader.

With Alfred Dowson, an exquisite of exquisites in poetry, but in no sense to be called a Catholic poet, Miss Brégy is at her ease: her delicate sense of values, her embracing sympathy with all that is fine and true in poetry mark her out as a predestined critic for such a gifted poet.

In Katherine Tynan Hinkson, she finds the completely Catholic poet—whose lightest word is tuned to faith, traditions and a code of beauty which we share in common heritage. It is rather surprising to read Miss Brégy's statement that there is in Mrs. Hinkson's work little of "Celtic other-worldliness;" she seems to overlook the fact that the very essence of "Celtic domesticity" is an other-worldliness, not perhaps that of the aesthete or modern Celtic pagan but something in which the very hand seems to touch upon the spiritual in which Mrs. Hinkson's poetry is perfectly exemplified.

With the quaint figure of Father John Bannister Tabb, a convert to the Church, a rare soul perfectly consonant to theological beauties, Miss Brégy is very happy in her treatment. She shows a full realization of his witty side as exemplified in her quotation from his Sentences to Be Corrected in—

> "Lay still," his mother often said
> When Washington had went to bed,
> But little Georgie would reply:
> "I set up but I cannot lie!"

"Father Tabb," writes Miss Brégy, "was a consummate artist—candidly, one of the very few consummate artists in American literature."

There is a very enthusiastic chapter on our heroic young poet, Joyce Kilmer, that will bring pleasure to his many admirers. Miss Brégy handles the question of his character and conversion to the Church in an able manner, with all the devotion of friendship and literary appreciation. Joyce Kilmer has taken so fixed a place in our Parnassus that it is well to fix his personal and poetical qualities more exactly than has generally been done. The building up of his biography has been well performed by R. C. Holliday, but the real characterizations of him have been defective in the omission of proper reference to his strongly Germanic vigor, solidity, and honesty of mind. The sentiment of Joyce Kilmer has none of the faerie of Irish poetry which he so much admired, but which racially he could not really claim: there is more of Heine in his singing than has yet been pointed out: there is more of his poetical personality in the selections of his first book, The Garland of Love, and in the shorter pieces such as his Blue Valentine, than in the later war-songs which Miss Brégy takes occasion to quote—even if we shall heartily agree with her in praising "that most direct . . . most saintly Prayer of a Soldier in France."

Of Louise Imogen Guiney, Miss Brégy declares—"She was essentially a poet and as a poet she will be treasured." The exquisite femininity of Miss Guiney seems to call for a masculine critic who would hardly call her a "minor" poet. There is some psychological question involved in this since to many of our best critics Miss Guiney is one of the greatest poets that America has produced. "She 'hated clothes' as much as any boy of fifteen: she habitually broke rosaries: she described herself as 'literally too happy to live' when exercising on the rings and vaulting bar of a Swedish gymnasium."

The "frightful responsibility" of her religion denotes her kinship with Saint Teresa of Avila and the best of the old mystics; her devotion showed a sane and exquisite appreciation of the beauties of the Faith without the slightest sugaring of pose or modern aestheticism: the honest common sense of her aspect of the sublime and beautiful is all too fine and simple for most of her modern critics.

Altogether Miss Brégy is one of our best American critics of poetry, and her pronouncements on the merits of Catholic poets have a finality that makes of her books authoritative references, an honor that has long been awarded to her first book of essays, The Poets' Chantey.

RODERICK GILL.

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Golden Pheasant, by Kathryn White Ryan. New York: G. P. Putnam's Sons. $2.00.

A FINE feminine fancy with all the delicacy in tone and tint that characterizes the best modern poetry are joined in Mrs. Kathryn White Ryan's book of poems, Golden Pheasant, with a firmness in constructive sense and solid qualities that make a remarkable and delightful combination. A poetry results that is sound to the core as a perfect apple, sane and healthy in its tenor as well as fair to sight and savor. Mrs. Ryan's book marks the arrival among American poets of a vigorous talent and presents a significant omen for all the swollen flock of hopeless, heartless singers of today, lost amid the intricacies of their technique and groping blindly for some direction of their thoughts.

There are in the pages of Golden Pheasant frequent illustrations of an unusual richness of imagination and a very thorough understanding of life. Her City of Rooted Flight—the initial New York poem of her volume, is made up of a series of rapidly etched impressions that show a graphic sense quite out of the ordinary. Mrs. Ryan displays a refreshing realization of the vigor of brevity, a sense that seems to be departing from our authors: in her Song After Travel, we catch a poignant touch of this quality—

"Oh, dear, this mad heart I took journeying!
Showed it bright cities, brought it a ring,
Gave it four buckles, a dress with a train,
Now it grasps back to its sorrow again."

Mrs. Ryan's aesthetics are honestly humane, in the true sense of the old humanities, which desiderated the cultivation of the heart as well as of the mind. We are impressed by this in reading her lines To a Child—

"You are rising up, a temple,
As a temple rising up!
You are dropping props, my scaffoldings,
As you would drop a cup.

O build a high sunned minaret
On hidden stones my torn hands set."

THOMAS WALSH.

The Country That I Love, by Marie, Queen of Roumania. With Illustrations by Queen Elizabeth of Greece. New York: Brentano's. $4.50.

THIS charming and very personal book grew out of intimate contact with the devastations of the war. "I stood in the centre of it all," writes the Queen of the Roumanians, "myself a refugee, a queen with empty hands; a mother who had just buried her youngest child." The tone which governs the volume is therefore akin to that familiar threnody which moves us in so many books by royal authors, from James's Quair to Rupprecht of Bavaria's sketches of travel. Its melancholy reminiscence of "things that have fallen to pieces and are no more" is blended with great, pleasing stretches of Roumanian color—of plum-tree bloom, old gypsy women, and weather-beaten shrines. If one has a fondness for romantic feeling, a little in the impulsive Slav fashion, there will be a good measure of enjoyment in the deft succession of pastels by means of which Queen Marie strives to convey the individuality of her land. Though these are often really beautiful, the value of the book may be said to lie in the information it supplies about Roumanian art and building. The author's instinct for saying

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the right things about these aspects of the national life will be equaled, at least for many readers, by the simple attractiveness of the pictures drawn by another royal hand. As for those who feel that civilization is wholly a matter of asphalt and electricity, it may do them no harm to read for a little while of a country where "strange people from the mountains" bring their respects and their petitions to their queen, who, feeling humbled, watches them "climbing down my steep steps, limping off each with his small share, dispersing, going back to their poor little homes among the hills."

GEORGE N. SHUSTER.

Rome of the Kings, by Ida Thallon Hill. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company. $3.00.

STUDENTS of ancient Roman literature have long been handicapped by lack of archaeological data bearing on their particular subject. The weakness of editions of classical authors seems to be on the archaeological side, and text books now in use are by no means up-to-date. To remedy this condition is the primary aim of Dr. Hill in the present volume, which furnishes an archaeological setting especially for Livy and Virgil. Much material from the early iron age in Italy has been scattered through many learned journals, often inaccessible to the general reader, but as yet no adequate résumé has been made since the material on hand is still in a stage of preparation and more is constantly accumulating. Dr. Hill does not contemplate such a résumé; instead she has made a selection of such material as appears most relevant to the classics in question.

The author traces the primitive settlements of Rome beginning with the paleolithic period and continues through the neolithic period and the bronze age to the iron age, telling what at the present time can be learned of the brave men before Romulus and of the travels of Antenor, the Trojan—the much neglected colleague of Aeneas. In a study of the Forum and low-lying districts and of the Seven Hills of Rome she shows the first developments of the city and state which are continued in Rome's conquest of the Campagna and extension into Etruria. Special attention is given the earliest inhabitants of Etruria, particularly of Veii, Caere, and Tarquinii, who far from being the clumsy, inartistic Etruscans of traditional history are shown as an advancing and artistic people of Italic stock whose civilization was closely related to that of the Romans. There follows a treatise on the early temples of Latium and Southern Etruria, and the volume closes with a chapter on museums illustrative of the prehistoric period of Rome.

Dr. Hill's book is well worthy of attention. She presents a wealth of data admirably correlated and discussed so as to form a narrative at once interesting and instructive. Without losing in accuracy and scholarship, she avoids technical language in so far as may be reasonably expected and thus places her work within the easy grasp of the general reader. It seems that her purpose of serving the student of the classics as well as the traveler in Italy and the general reader has been successfully accomplished.

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BRIEFER MENTION

Scandinavian Relations With Ireland During the Viking Period, by A. Walsh. Dublin: The Talbot Press. 3/6.

THERE are several features that make of Miss Walsh's publication a work of special interest for us. Among other things it is noted in the Annals of Tighernach (A.D. 716) that the ancient monasteries were called cathair or civitas or cities; also an interesting connotation of the story of the Goddess of Reason shouting from the high altar of Notre Dame, in the tale of Ota, wife of the Norse Viking Thorgeis (about 823 A.D.) who captured Clonmacnoise, desecrated it, while Ota sat upon the altar and delivered herself of the oracular responses (a frecartha). This same Thorgeis usurped the abbacy of Armagh about 839 A.D. Dublin, it seems, was of no importance before the coming of the Scandinavian settlers; there were three of its foreign kings who ruled also as monarchs of York in England. These old Norse kings soon accepted Christianity and were accustomed to send their bishops for consecration in Canterbury to acknowledge the archbishop's supremacy, but the Christian primacy remained in Armagh. Miss Walsh refers to the letter sent by the clergy and people of Dublin in 1121 A.D., saying—"You know that the bishops of Ireland, especially the Bishop of Armagh, are extremely angry with us because we always wish to remain under your authority." After the Synod of Kells in 1132, the bishops of Dublin, Armagh, Limerick and Waterford were always consecrated in Ireland. Miss Walsh has made good use of the Icelandic sages in collating her history with the Gaelic manuscripts, and renders a valuable contribution to the early history of the northern races, Celtic, British and Scandinavian.

All in a Garden Fair, by Alice T. A. Quackenbush. New York: De la Mare. $2.00.

ALICE T. A. QUACKENBUSH gives us the romance of flowers; any student who has ever sought to find the origins or history of a tree or flower will appreciate the keen want of such a book as All in a Garden Fair. Poets in particular whose divagations into botany, led only by the desire for beautiful names, will find here a treasure trove of lovely references, charming legends and histories. To all of this Mrs. Quackenbush brings an exquisite touch of literary refinement; she reveals a captivating humor and a very sensitive wit. One who loves gardens and flowers will press her book with tenderness among the dry-as-dust botanies, the seed-catalogues and the other generally soulless publications of horticulture societies. We learn some charming stories of the flowers. For instance, the origin of the red geranium that emerged from the white mallow blushing from under the robe of Mahomet that had been laid upon it. Of the forget-me-not, Mrs. Quackenbush writes—"When the Father was naming all the flowers, this shy little one came back to ask, timidly, her name once again, confessing that she 'had forgotten.' In consequence, He called her 'forget-me-not.' What was her first name? Who knows? Who cares?" A wealth of information is imparted in the charming style of this book.

The title page and index for volume II of The Commonweal are now ready. These will be sent upon request. Arrangements have been made for binding volumes I and II in leather or cloth. Information on binding will be given upon application to the office of The Commonweal.

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THE QUIET CORNER

I counsel thee, shut not thy heart nor thy library.—C. LAMB.

"It looks as though the Lucy Stoners were gathering no moss just now," remarked Primus Criticus, removing his silk muffler beside Doctor Angelicus's chair.

"How is that?" asked the Doctor, raising his head from the heap of gorgeous postcards he was addressing to foreign countries to the titled Herrs, Frus, Condesas and Duques of his favorite lands in time to catch the Christmas steamers.

"The Junior League of New York will conduct a debate on the Lucy Stone League," replied Criticus. "Resolved: That married women should keep their own names. Affirmative, Ruth Hale, the wife of Heywood Broun. Negative, Laurette Taylor, the wife of J. Hartley Manners. The judges are also interesting—Ethel Barrymore, late wife of Russell Colt; Alice Duer Miller, wife of Henry Wise Miller; and Mr. Frank Crowninshield, as yet unattached."

"It should prove a diverting afternoon amid these clashing interests of married, divorced, spinstered and bachelored disputants and judges; some bright sparks of wit should shower from the anvil to brighten up the Junior League." There was a grim determination in the jaw of Hereticus, who had never been asked to any Junior League balls.

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"I trust they will consider the matter of the children's names in this discussion," added Angelicus, a trifle weariedly. "I remember some years ago in Spain when my guide, Pedro Gonzalez, introduced me to his father, Hermenogildo Ramirez, and his mother, Teresita Guerrero, and when I asked him where the Gonzalez came from, he told me it was the name of his grandmother on his mother's side—all most decent folk, he added with the utmost unconcern. I confess I was startled. I wonder if these married women will insist that their children carry their mothers' names or will speak of a daughter as Mary Jones John's daughter—Johansdatter the Scandinavians would call her—or insist that after her mother, she should remain just another Mary Smith. The old Mac's and O's in Ireland and Scotland, the suffixes of the Russian vitches, the Polishes eskis and eskas—all point to the fact that these questions, which we hoped were settled for good and all, are still in some minds considered novel."

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Hereticus seemed deep in meditation. "It seems to me," he said after a pause, "that if John Jones cannot impose his name upon his matrimonial partner, at least he might hug to his paternal heart a little Mary Jones of unquestionable nomenclature and pure descent in the line of the Jones's and that he might ask the Smiths of his wife's family to desist in their attempts to prolong their ancient name at his expense."

"But Doctor," interrupted Miss Anonymoncule, "the Junior League is discussing social practice in marriage—not the matter of offspring."

"Quite an alien subject, you should see, Doctor," added Hereticus. "This is a question of a home or a career for the women or ladies."

"Ladies! Hereticus!" snapped the Doctor. "Your speech is archaic. I used to know some ladies—in my extreme youth, I saw them fading and dying away—a lovely roseate sunset, I assure you, Hereticus. Heigh-ho, when I think of those silken white heads at the windowpanes of the past; the tea-kettle simmering on the coals; Old Dog Tray lying close to the hearth; the portraits of William Cullen Bryant and grandpa's discharge

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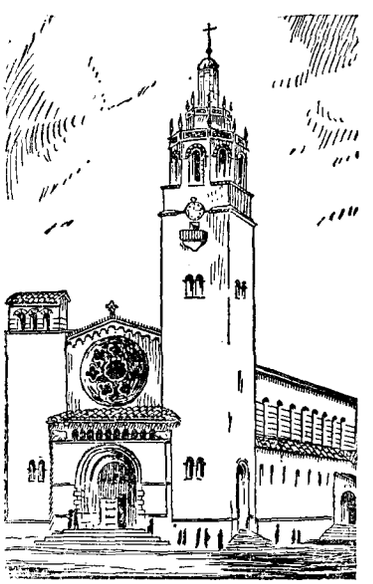

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from the Volunteer Firemen hanging over their heads—dead, vanished days of tidies and fancy-work, rag-carpets and patchwork quilts, crinoline and bombazine—how far away you seem today! I can remember the exquisite grace of Margaret Sangster who could refuse a poem at Harper's Bazaar and still make you feel an honored writer: Mrs. Runkle with a lovely aristocratic grace and motherly elegance: Mary Mapes Dodge and Jeanette Gilder, intermediate types, with all the frankness and freedom of the modern woman, and yet with the halo of ladyhood still around their brows! And their successors—"

"Lovely little things," interrupted Primus Criticus.

"With their bobbed heads, their tortoise-shell goggles, their cigarettes. 'How now, old dear?' they greet me," said the Doctor with a suspicion of growing acerbity. 'Is it Chesterfield or Camel? Or Bronx or Martini? Take it easy—I have just a whole minute to give you. This is press-day—the holidays next week—our Palm Beach number, Horse Show, Dog Show, Army and Navy Game, Fall Opening at Altman's—Where do we go from here?' Such is their decorous vocabulary when I come to ask about my sonnet sequence, my life-long study on Petrarca, and my manuscript of Civil War Recollections."

"How they can dance," added Primus Criticus, in appreciative reverie.

"I love that shivery jazz music myself," and the youthful Tittivillus, the down of manhood hardly on his cheek, shook the office floor with several impromptu Charleston movements.

* * *

"Lest we forget," summed up the Doctor, sorrowfully, "lest we lose all memory of these departed graces of old, I am going to see my congresswoman this evening; I am going to propose a new bill to our legislature, a new monument for our National Cemetery to which I shall invite President and Mrs. Coolidge and all the ladies of the Cabinet, the president of all these women's clubs, heads of female colleges and maternity institutions. We shall have a great outpouring at the inauguration of the monument, speeches by the great women orators of the day, and unveil an enduring piece of granite covered with memorial wreaths, poems, and flowers in honor forever of 'The Unknown Lady.'"

—The Librarian.

The Commonweal requests its subscribers to communicate any changes of address two weeks in advance, to ensure the receipt of all issues.

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